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ABSTRACT

This document contains abstracts of the 82 concurrent session presentations at a 1996 conference on the experience of college freshmen regarding their academic achievement, attitudes, and re-enrollment for the following year. Each abstract is designed to give a succinct statement of each concurrent session presentation and to provide a name, address, and telephone number of a contact person. The topics covered in these papers include the following: discovery learning, academic advising, research strategies, acculturation, mentoring, differences in expectations between lecturers and freshmen, student financial need, workshops, writing activities, racial and ethnic tensions, math instruction, academic standards, teaching methods, student viewpoints on learning, programs for traditional and non-traditional students, introductory economics, retention strategy, academic and recreational seminars, preservice teacher induction, the urban college experience, independent study, native students, exchange students, probation, student adjustment, supplemental instruction, writing fellows' programs, commuter colleges, developing an undergraduate core program, survival tactics, service-learning, library skills, peer counseling, writing across the curriculum, student government, class environment, confrontation skills, teacher effectiveness, educational outcomes, study strategies, freshman seminars, student identity, fostering community, the challenges of diversity, integrating the cognitive and the affective, open access, multiculturalism, social responsibility, disabled students, and Freshman English. (CK)

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Ninth International Conference on The First-Year Experience®

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ED 398 792

A Passport to Enhanced Student Learning, Success, Satisfaction, and Retention

15-19 July 1996 University of St. Andrews Scotland

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Conference Proceedings
for the
Ninth International Conference
on the
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15-19 July, 1996
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St. Andrews, Scotland

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Introduction

The Ninth International Conference on The First-Year Experience was held at the University of St. Andrews 15-19 July, 1996. During this five-day conference, educators from all over the world met in St. Andrews, Scotland to concentrate on the foundations for improving the undergraduate experience. This *Proceedings* has been produced for those who attended the conference sponsored by the National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience and Students in Transition and the Division of Continuing Education at the University of South Carolina in the United States of America as well as the University of Teesside in England.

This publication contains a compilation of the concurrent session abstracts written by the individual presenters. Each abstract is designed to give the reader a succinct statement of each concurrent session presentation and to provide a name, address and telephone number of a person to contact for additional information.

The conference staff hopes that you will find the *Proceedings* helpful as you continue your challenging work with first-year students.

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Classroom Research and Discovery Learning in Freshman English
Dr. William Palmer

To find creative ways to help first-year students in English composition learn more effectively, teachers can practice classroom research: they can experiment with pedagogy, gather and assess data, and share their findings with other teachers. First-year students will benefit if teachers use active, discovery learning.

In my presentation I will explain four examples of my own classroom research in English 101 College Rhetoric that other teachers can use themselves:

1) Relying Less on Composition Texts and Doing More in Class.
Composition textbooks lecture students on how to write rather than help students actively construct knowledge of the composing process. Students do not need to read about strategies for generating prose when teachers can easily introduce these methods and have students perform them in class. Doing teaches. Teachers can design activities to help students develop critical and creative thinking skills in class.

2) Helping Students Create a Working Textbook of Sentence Tools.
Rather than doing exercises on grammar in a handbook, students can actively create their own working textbook of sentence tools: by transcribing a few model sentences a teacher dictates, by discovering a pattern in the models, by practicing the pattern with their own sentences, and by applying the pattern to their rough drafts.

3) Enabling Students to Teach Each Other.
Rather than a teacher leading discussions of a book, students in small groups can present essays to the rest of the class by developing activities such as performing skits that demonstrate key ideas. If students learn best by doing, then teaching is one of the best ways of learning.

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4) Taking Students Out of the Classroom.
Teachers can engage students in thought-provoking activities not dependent on written texts. Teachers can arrange for students to interview senior citizens and to write biographical reports to give them as gifts; to draw human models in an art studio and to compare this process to writing; and to visit a human anatomy laboratory to write about how inquiry bridges the sciences and humanities.

Classroom research encourages teachers to experiment with discovery learning. Students learn best by doing, by experiencing the surprise of discovery, and by reflecting on what they have done. A teacher's job is to help students construct knowledge on their own, not to construct knowledge for them. In this way students take more responsibility for what they learn, and they are more able to apply what they learn to other contexts.

During the first part of my presentation I will ask participants to do some of the activities I discuss. I will ask them to reflect in writing what they discovered from doing the activities, and I will ask them to share some of their reflections.

Toward the end of my presentation I will ask participants to consider three questions for judging the value of a teaching method. Is the method simple and surprising? Does it utilize the power of contrast? Is the information that we want students to learn worth knowing?

During the interactive discussion I will ask participants to speculate on how they might incorporate classroom research and discovery learning in their own freshman courses and to evaluate their own pedagogy by considering the three questions for judging the value of a teaching method.

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First-Year Academic Advising: Patterns in the Present—Pathways to the Future

Gary L. Kramer, Associate Dean of Admissions & Records, Brigham Young University

ABSTRACT

The premise of this session is deeply rooted in the belief that (i) there are always going to be new first-year students arriving on our campuses each year, and (ii) no mission is more vital to the success of higher education than insuring the initial success of new university and college students. Nothing is more important to their immediate and long-term success than outstanding academic advisement. Clearly this will call for new partnerships to be developed on our campuses in the name of improving academic advising and, hence, learning and student success. All of us involved with first-year students are challenged to do our very best in helping them make a successful transition to college. We admit and advise them on the assumption they will succeed.

Doing a session on first-year student advising presents a few dilemmas. Like the monograph, this session recognizes various groups of new students who enter college as underprepared, undecided, adults, students of color, athletes or disabled students, and others. This session, to address the needs of most first-year populations, uses a comprehensive definition of first-year advising which centers on student growth and development.

Whenever possible, the terms "first-year student" or "entering student" are used instead of freshmen. As noted in the monograph, while the latter does have some popular appeal, it does not accurately describe today's increasingly diverse student population. Students entering college today are not necessarily "fresh" (connoting "fresh" from high school), and they are certainly not all "men" since a majority of today's students are women.

Another dilemma is the subject matter surrounding the first-year student (and year). It is vast, as noted in the monograph's table of contents. Who provides first-year advising services, where and when they should be offered, and how or what constitutes first-year advising, only briefly discussed in the monograph chapters, cannot be adequately covered in this session. On the other hand, the session will:

(1) discuss **first-year student characteristics and issues.** First-year student advising concerns will be addressed from a student development point of view. A model/ taxonomy of academic advising services will also be presented to show the relationship between the entering student's needs or tasks to be accomplished in the first year and the institution's response through related academic services.

(2) emphasize **strategies from the monograph and others sources that strengthen first-year advising programs**.

(3) use an **action plan** designed especially for session participants to work through the **planning process** to enhance first-year advising on their campus. The action plan is a blueprint for assessing, implementing, evaluating, and planning academic advisement for new entering students.

RESEARCH STRATEGIES FOR LEARNING SUCCESS: RESPONDING TO FIRST YEAR STUDENTS AT POINT OF NEED

Judy Zebrowski
Librarian/Information Specialist in User Education

This presentation focuses on a network of supportive strategies offered by librarians, faculty, and other professional staff to students at time of need throughout their first year experience. Bertrand Library's First Year Program offers a systematic, timely approach of library experiences aimed at building basic research skills and enhancing the learning experience of first year students. Our initiatives address cognitive and affective learning techniques and behaviors, and also provide for the motor skills needed to direct students through critical thinking endeavors and the research anxiety they may encounter in the learning process. Students are provided the comfort level of learning from peer tutors as well as making vitally important academic connections with librarians. These adaptive levels of teaching and learning establish the appropriate climate and culture for students, timed to their needs during the academic calendar. Students come to realize the need to balance paper and computerized sources of information to meet their course assignments; they learn coping strategies to deal with the challenges of changing technologies; they enjoy learning to browse and the serendipity of discovering knowledge through independent means.

Our directives include the development of mutually supportive partnerships with faculty through Foundation Seminars for entering students at Bucknell University. This collaboration among educators includes course assignment design, instruction delivery, reference referral by appointment, and other custom-tailored-to-need library experiences. We will relate how our collaboration has benefited both educators and students on our campus. Finally, this session will provide an opportunity for participants to share and exchange ideas for developing similar programs at their own institutions.

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Academic/ Student Affairs Partnerships:

Providing a Context for Reading Acquisition and Acculturation in the Freshman Year

Candalene J. McCombs, Ph.D.
Kathryn E. Philliben

Many students whose reading skills are not adequate for reading college level assignments are native speakers or bilingual speakers of English, yet they function in the academic community as foreigners, confronting many of the problems of second language learners. The major obstacle they face is not really learning mechanics of the reading process, but mastering the redundancy patterns that are inherent in written as well as spoken language.

Redundancy, which is essentially information overlap, is a defining characteristic of language, and it is critical in the transfer of meaning either in speech or writing. There are three types of redundancy -- syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic; language deficient students have not mastered syntactic, semantic, (lexical and discoursal aspects), and pragmatic (prior knowledge) redundancy features in written language.

Language-deficient students not only need instruction in reading skills but a course that provides a context in which reading acquisition can occur in much the same manner that second language acquisition occurs in an acculturation process in a new linguistic community. Acculturation occurs only through experience and participation within the community, but it can be accelerated.

A crucial aspect of this process of acculturation and language acquisition is formulating and testing hypotheses about the rules of language, which leads inevitably to errors. However, these errors are necessary because they generate feedback from the speech community. The learner must receive the feedback from the speech community and continuously modify his/her ways of speaking, or in this case, reading, speaking and writing, until they match those of the members using the same linguistic system. Such an approach provides a context for making errors and receiving the feedback necessary to become proficient in reading, speaking, and writing academic language.

Providing a focus on pragmatic redundancy is the easiest route to producing a context in which students can formulate and test hypotheses and make the necessary

errors. However, a selective repetition of a set of ideas invariably leads also to semantic and syntactic redundancies as well, so the student has the opportunity to make errors and receive feedback in all three areas.

In the United States linguistics redundancy patterns present major obstacles to learning for bilingual students, African-American students, and disadvantaged students who have not had access to an environment that provides constant and varied exposure to standard English in both written and oral forms. However, in any educational context where there are students who speak nonstandard forms of the language used for education, such an approach is vital. Since it draws on a universal language acquisition model, it applies in instruction in virtually any language. Further, an academic discipline sponsors what is essentially a speech community. There are special discourse models and a lexicon that students must acquire, and linguistic redundancy patterns are inherent in the structure of both the discourse mode and semantic concepts within the lexicon.

In addition to an instructional model that supports the acquisition of comprehensive reading skills, it is critical to provide a context for acculturation into the academic community. The context must include attention to the seven developmental vectors established by Arthur Chickering. Those seven challenges identified by Chickering are achieving competence, managing emotions, becoming autonomous, establishing identity, freeing interpersonal relationships, clarifying purpose, and developing integrity.

The role of language in meeting these challenges begins with the linguistic notions of competence and performance. Linguistic competence is actually subconscious knowledge of the grammar, which is manifested through a speaker's linguistic performance. Students entering the particular linguistic community of a specific discipline lack many of the fundamental grammatical structures as well as pragmatic redundancies common to the ways of speaking and writing within the discipline. Students are confronted with a variety of new speech communities or speech communities in which they have never really achieved competence. The other vectors can also be related to language. Addressing the developmental vectors supports development in the use of language because it encourages choices that support an expansion of intellectual activity that in turn strengthens syntactic and semantic structure, which leads to improvement in reading and writing.

Instructional methods such as small group work and joint projects also contribute to growth and achievement in the areas of developmental challenge. In addition, the language acquisition approach to strengthening reading, writing, and oral language skills provides an appropriate balance of challenge and support, which are essential in addressing all the developmental challenges. This approach is used in a course taught by both faculty and Student Affairs administrators.

Katholieke *Universiteit* Nijmegen

The Learning Contract

Dr. M.W.G. Theunissen

According to the 'Headlines of strategic policy 1995-2000', the Catholic University of Nijmegen (KUN) wants to help students find an appropriate education, also in connection with the limited time of the Dutch scholarship. Based on intensive coaching and testing, the KUN intends to provide students with an -argumented- first study-advice at the end of the first semester of the first year at university. This is followed by a second, final advice at the end of the first year. This advice is pressing, not binding. A negative advice should be accompanied with a recommendation for an alternative coarse at university or higher vocational education. In co-operation with the College of Higher Vocational Education in Arnhem and Nijmegen (HAN), the KUN pays attention to the improvement of the first year educational programs, the selection of students and a smooth transfer to the HAN.
The study-advice has to be (self-) selective and should not only be based on coarse credit, but also on information about the student himself. On behalf of the argumentation of the study-advice, several plans are being developed, e.g. the learning contract. The purpose of this contract is to improve the educational engagement and independence of the students.

The contract looks much like the learning contract described by Knowles (1986). He says that a 'learning contract typically specifies (1) the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values to be acquired by the learner (learning objectives), (2) how these objectives are to be accomplished (learning resources and strategies), (3) the target date for their accomplishment, (4) what evidence will be presented to demonstrate that the objectives have been accomplished, and (5) how this evidence will be judged or validated' (p.38). The Empire State College (ESC, 1976) of the State University of New York is an example of a university that makes use of learning contracts. In the educational environment that goes with learning contracts, the relationship between the teachers and students is one of mutual learning: they co-operate, they are both responsible for the quality of the learning.

This American example of learning contracts is very inspiring in developing our own learning contract for first-year students. The contract as now developed, offers a framework that each student can use to record his agreements with the faculty and with himself, in relation to his study. Both teachers and students are considered to be (semi-) professionals, ready to co-operate to make the contract work. By way of the contract the student commits himself to his own agreements and becomes aware of the choices he makes.
Last January, a group of 20 first-year students and their teachers have signed experimental learning contracts on a voluntary basis. This contract contains an analysis of the students learning style, his initial knowledge on the subject, and his expectations on accomplishing the objectives. The students promise to be industrious, the teachers agree to provide counselling whenever necessary. Information, gathered by the teachers during their regular conversations with the students because of the contract, will be used to provide the students an argumented study-advice at the end of the first year.

To be successful, the learning contract has to become a part of the university culture: signing learning contracts has to become self-evident for every one. Of course, this will take some time.

During the presentation and discussion, we will tell more about the recent developments on the learning contract. We will show some examples that students and teachers have agreed to, and we will present the first experiences.
The discussion will focus on the question how to measure the results of the learning contract. At what moment this experiment has succeeded?

References

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Developing Mentorships to Improve the Retention of First-Generation College Students

Nancy Boldt, Director of Single Parents Program
Ursula Hibbert, Career Counselor

Many single parents come from families and environments which do not provide role models or modeling for positive work and life roles. In addition, students are frequently confused by the wide array of career possibilities and do not know the ins and outs of the world of work. This includes knowledge of: environment, skills, attitude, office communications and expectations. Everyone needs support and encouragement to continue their education and to make wise career and life choices. A well-designed mentoring program can provide such support for first-generation college students.

Several years ago Champlain College instituted a mentoring program with Dean Witter, a local financial investment corporation. The program has since expanded to include representatives from a variety of local businesses. Each year 12 to 15 mentors are matched up with select students, on a one-to one basis. Students selected for the mentoring program possess the following qualities: 1) a high level of motivation and commitment to the college, and 2) a lack of professional role models from their family and environment.

The mentoring program offers students assistance in forming a relationship with a professional person who can offer them vocational support, guidance and counseling so that students can develop their vocational skills and contacts. Training and guidance is given to mentors from college personnel. The ensuing mentor relationship is one which is supportive rather than one which fosters dependence of students upon mentors.

A good mentor relationship provides role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling and friendship for students. Mentors provide strong, positive role models for students, and they serve as resource people when students are making academic and vocational choices. First-generation college students, without professional role models, who participate in such a program are more likely to continue their education than those who lack such support.

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Successful mentoring programs are well-planned. This workshop will teach you how to establish a mentoring program by identifying key players, assessing needs, matching students with mentors, identifying liability issues, developing active community partnerships, recruiting participants, training mentors, providing a system of on-going education and support and monitoring the progression and success of the program. Participants will learn how the Champlain College mentoring program has developed and what a successful mentoring program requires.

Mentoring is a modest intervention that has good potential for providing first-generation college students with strong personal support as well as academic and vocational guidance which they may otherwise lack. Such a program, when combined with academic offerings, can help students to develop to their full potential and has broad social policy implications.

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英文學系
Department of English

Towards Total Commitment : Workshops for First Year Students

Eunice Tang and Christina Ng

ABSTRACT

This year, the first year BA in English for Professional Communication (BAEPC) students at the English Department of the City University of Hong Kong were required to take up a minimum of 28 semester hours on some compulsory workshops and some elective sessions which seemed most useful and interesting to them.

The workshops covered areas on technical skills, study skills and language skills. Staff from the English Department were invited to devise workshops based on their specialism and interests. Professionals from the external organisations were contacted to run workshops based on their expertise. Tutors involved were free to design the teaching materials, the teaching mode and the teaching medium. The teaching hours and group size were also flexible.

In order to make sure that students could benefit from attending the workshops, much time was spent on the working out the objectives and the design of the whole series. It was hoped that the workshops would respond to students' needs or module co-ordinators' requests, complement or supplement other modules in the course, help students to fit in university life, understand the role and operation of new technologies, stimulate students' interest in specific study areas, raise awareness on personal and academic development, provide supplementary skills and knowledge which would be useful but were not included in the course, and most importantly, help the first year students to fit in the university life.

The characteristics of the workshop series are that: there were no specific guidelines and restrictions on the content, format and length of the workshops; there were no assessments and thus there was less pressure on both the tutor and the student; the arrangement of the workshops was highly flexible and immediate adjustment could be made in respond to students' request; and the types of workshop could vary from semester to semester and from year to year - all depends on the needs of the first year students in that year.

To facilitate better co-ordination and organisation, the year one co-ordinator initiated contact with the staff and the guest speakers, build up a list of workshops which met the needs and interests of the students, consult student representatives and oversee all the arrangements. With the identifiable rationale and the clear objectives, workshops

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which evolved from students' interests and needs were finalised. Altogether three compulsory and twenty-eight elective workshops were held in Semester A and eleven compulsory and 1 elective workshops were conducted in Semester B. A total of 43 various types of workshop, including media visit, video production, software proficiency training, language and study skills, were offered.

Throughout the year, feedback was received from the students through official and unofficial channels. At the end of the academic year, students were invited to comment on the usefulness, the relevance and the difficulties of the workshops by filling out the workshop record form. From the students' evaluation, it showed that the workshops were well-received by them.

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Title of Presentation

From secondary school to university in Hong Kong: differences in expectations between lecturers and first year students

Presenters: Yvonne Loong
Vicki Yung Kit Yee

Abstract

This study focuses on the different perspectives on higher education between university lecturers and first year tertiary students in Hong Kong. Most university lecturers and first year students are divided in expectations of learning and teaching styles, end-goals, assignment standard and responsibility in learning. These differences constantly lead to frustration and stress on both parties.

In this paper, we examine the experience of the first years students under the Hong Kong education system. We will look at the difficulties and changes students have to make when they move from a local high school to a college. It is crucial to understand the abrupt change in the students' life and see how their fixed concepts developed in their high school experience about teaching have affected their university life.

To bridge the gap, we also discuss ways to orient our students to the culture of higher education. These options include small-group learning, putting short assignments into a long-term project, progressive development of classroom interaction and having students to take up more responsibility in learning.

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Title of Presentation:

Implementing the collaborative project approach in an English course for first year economics and finance students in Hong Kong

Presenters: Vicki Kit-yee Yung
Yvonne Loong

Abstract

The collaborative project approach is designed to enhance students' communicative skills needed for team work since most professionals in the business field are required to work collaboratively.

The purpose of implementing this approach is to maximize student involvement in the classroom and have students taking more responsibilities for their learning since getting students to participate in the classroom is always a problem for teachers in Hong Kong.

In the collaborative project, students working in groups of four or five are assigned to a long term career-related project. The major tasks in the project involve formulating work plans, information gathering, intensive group meetings, oral discussions, formal oral presentations, and business writing.

The students will be given a certain degree of autonomy to design their projects. For example, students may need to select an industry, a country or a corporation to study and then decide what the important issues are in the industry or the corporation.

Since more than 50% of class time will be devoted to student interaction, the habit of participation and a sense of responsibility can be developed through the collaborative approach. The project will also enhance students' motivation and sense of satisfaction in learning as they are deeply involved in a long-term project throughout the semester. The students will also benefit from the approach in terms of problem-solving skills, interpersonal communication skills and time management through their deep involvement in the project.

With this approach, the lecturers will be moving away from being the focus of attention and sole information supplier in class to a classroom manager and an environment facilitator. They will have more time to create a cooperative environment rather than a competitive classroom for the students. Since the students will take up responsibility for their own learning, pressure on the lecturers/tutors is lessened and they will focus on the learning of the students.

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WRITING ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Stephen J. Newmann and Katherine M. Fischer

Students often feel that their first year experience is singular to their own corner of the country. In order to stretch their vision, we began this adventure to find out what happens when two first year seminar classes undertake e-journaling (electronic journaling) across the 800 miles from Iowa to Maryland and back. "Writing Across the Country" is a works in progress project between Clarke College in Dubuque, Iowa, and Mount St. Mary's College in Emmitsburg, Maryland. As First Year Seminar teachers from these two small colleges, we have connected the 30 students from our combined classes through the medium of e-mail on the Internet in writing groups of six, three from each school.

The presentation of our project includes the following:

1. Goals of the project
2. Survey results revealing student attitudes toward both paper journals and e-journals
3. Issue clusters discussed by students in journal entries
4. Journal assignments and timeline
5. Practical concerns for teachers collaborating on such a project (from negotiating topics to developing handouts to dealing with students' rights to privacy to determining goals to teaching students e-mail etiquette to determining grading criteria to working with internet technology)
6. Samples of student e-journal entries
7. Evaluation of how the project is successful and what could be done to improve upon it.
8. Questions, answers, comments.

We anticipate that the highlight of the presentation will be

outcomes from the project, that is the reading of entries from student journals on issues like

- Campus Concerns - roommate relationships, commuter life, college policies and the like
- Tolerance and Marginalization - sexism, racism, classism, concerns of sexual preference, multiculturalism
- Global and Local involvements - world and local events involving conscience, volunteer activities, social and political responsibility
- Fitness and Health - exercise, acquaintance rape, eating disorders, Aids, drug and alcohol abuse, and other concerns
- Transitions from High School to College - homesickness, shifts in family and friend relationships.

Since this is the first time we are undertaking the project and since it will be in progress as this conference convenes, we imagine that our presentation will generate a sort of energy drawing participants into the organic nature of our experience.

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Racial and Ethnic Tensions on United States Campuses, Universal Implications

Dr. Jocelind Gant, Assistant to the President for Social Equity
Dr. James Kole, Associate Professor, Academic Support Services

ABSTRACT

This presentation will address the escalating racial and ethnic tensions on college and university campuses in the United States and the country as a whole. Specific examples of racial and ethnic problems on American campuses will be discussed and compared with the racial and ethnic conflicts in the United States. The fact that race and ethnic tensions in America clearly seems to be on the rise presents an enormous challenge for college and university presidents, student affairs administrators, faculty, and most importantly, students themselves. Race and ethnic relations on college campuses mirror race relations in America. Since demographic projections for the year 2080 suggest that more than half of all Americans will be people of color--this means that colleges and universities will share similar demographics. What will become of the people of the U.S. if racial and ethnic conflicts continue to increase as they are presently? A 1995 report on race relations by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) states that hate crimes, race discrimination lawsuits, and other race related incidents in America, climbed by 20%. What are the implications for human interaction around the world? Will multiculturalism flourish and people of diverse backgrounds be cherished for their unique differences, values, and gifts?

Proactive programs on many American campuses involve multicultural awareness and sensitivity programs for faculty, staff, and students. It was noted in the American Counseling Association's Counseling Today, March, 1996 article "Tension Running High In Higher Education" that many white faculty members are often uncomfortable speaking with inner city African American students and don't respond as thoroughly or effectively to such students as they do to white or suburban students. The same may be true for other students from diverse backgrounds. One suggested faculty development program involves a focused project on teaching and advising non-traditional students. Clarion University, established a joint faculty development and student development program called "Project Flourish" in 1978. The purpose of "Project Flourish" was to enhance the quality of faculty-student and faculty-administrator relationships and to address the attrition of first year students. It involved a faculty development workshop and an innovative three credit course for freshman (A.S. 110: The Student in the University). The course includes interpersonal skills and topics such as multiculturalism, the history and value of higher education, campus resources etc.

Other proactive programs that will be discussed include: assessing campus climate; attaining, maintaining, and increasing administrative support for diverse multicultural programming; developing hiring policies that favor nontraditional faculty and staff; curricular reform; recruiting and retaining nontraditional students; developing a list of diversity consultants--and involving them in training programs, etc.

One unique proactive approach to improve race and ethnic relations on the Clarion campus is the "Building Bridges" program. The purpose of the program is to build bridges of communication and understanding among students of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and in so doing reduce the potential for inter-group conflict. The program also serves to enhance the existing link between students' classroom and residential experiences. The program operates by training student associates (minority and majority students that are of varying cultural backgrounds) in various interpersonal communications and small group leadership skills. The student associates are then invited by faculty to visit their classes for discussions on issues such as: segregation, interracial dating, racism, scholarships, stereotypes, women, Native Americans, affirmative action, etc.

Additional proactive approaches to stemming the problem of racial and ethnic tensions on campuses will be shared. Following the formal seminar, the participants will be guided into a brief, small group exercise on "what works" on their campuses. These "best" ideas will be shared with all participants for possible implementation on their campuses.

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A PASSPORT TO SUCCESS IN THE MATH CLASSROOM AND BEYOND

Joan R. Monaghan
Chairperson, Department of Mathematics
Director, Math and Writing Center

Robert C. Gebhardt
Professor of Mathematics and Astronomy

Of all areas of study, the sciences and mathematics traditionally have the greatest attrition rates, especially in the students' first year of college. Among students admitted to New Jersey community colleges, more than half need remedial computation and almost three quarters require a course in elementary algebra. In 1989, the County College of Morris established a Mathematics and Writing Center, a learning center where students come for assistance in reading, writing, and mathematics-related areas. The students seeking assistance in this center are often first-year students or students who have been advised to attend by a faculty member or counselor. Once students have experienced the service of the Center they become strong advocates and regular customers, semester after semester.

The facilities of the Center include videocassette players, interactive videodisc workstations and a background classical music system. The services of the Center include faculty tutors, paraprofessionals, student peer tutors, study and review sessions, workshops and an intensive tutor-training program. The literature and our experience confirm that peer tutors provide the most effective tutoring.

An interactive television classroom, and an integrated computer instruction laboratory offer the students alternative methods of learning, In addition, the College reaches out to women and high-risk students through a mentoring program supported by a Cooperative Education Grant and collaborates with local business and industry.

For the last three years, the Math and Writing Center has been conducting partial analyses of the effectiveness of the Center. The retention rate among students who use the Math and Writing Center (i.e., the percentage of students who return to college or graduate) is between 77% and 81% each year.

The most important functions of a Math and Writing Center are to prevent failure and frustration and to aid in student retention. The College has provided a friendly hospitable environment in which students are encouraged to succeed. Our statistics show that many students do , indeed, succeed.

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Title of Presentation: Maintaining Academic Standards Among First Year Students in a Cross-Cultural Setting.

Presenters' Names: Malcolm Innes-Brown, Patrick Forde, Pamela Hedges.

ABSTRACT

In conducting first year programs at the Curtin University Business School in Perth, Western Australia, attempts have been made to balance increased enrolment numbers from cross-cultural backgrounds with the maintenance of academic standards. Over the last ten years, the university has been very successful in attracting international students from Asian countries, but the attraction has not always carried with it a corresponding adjustment of program content and delivery to changing patterns of first year intakes. It is possible that the quality of academic achievement and intellectual activity has been compromised by enrolment imperatives governed in no small measure by infrastructure reliance on the need to recruit first year intake offshore. This has meant that the notion of academic standards has had to be defined and redefined in both multi-disciplinarian and multi-cultural contexts. This is no easy task, as the parameters influencing academic standards run across traditional teaching lines and established content boundaries. In addition, the situation is made more complex as universities in such positions have often assumed the status of innovative and flexible organisations responsive to international forces in the education market place.

In seeking to understand the dimension of the problem at the point of first contact, on-going research of first year commerce students reveals deficit quality-control in terms of student dissatisfaction with course content and program structure, but oddly enough, not with academic staff themselves.

This paper addresses the options open for student experience in their initial year of tertiary education by benchmarking cross-cultural parameters in learning habits which are brought by first year sudents to university. In so doing, the question answered in the paper centres on attempts to establish agreement between students and staff on what each means by the term "academic standards" and consensus on how such standards are reached through teaching styles, learning objectives and assessment descriptors.

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Title of presentation:

There's nothing so lonely as being in a crowd: a teaching strategy which developed a sense of belonging for first-year students.

Presenters names: Pamela Hedges
Kerry Pedigo

ABSTRACT

In tertiary teaching a balance is always sought between philosophic and pragmatic, theoretical and experiential. In the teaching of first-year undergraduate Organizational Behaviour within the Business School of a large Australian University this balance has been a continuing challenge. A commitment to experiential learning within the teaching philosophy of this course has led to many innovative and student-centred strategies being adopted in recent years.

Notable amongst these has been the simulation, within the classroom, of self-managed work teams or semi-autonomous work groups. Students are grouped into small teams to perform structured activities relevant to the topics under consideration in the course, and simultaneously undertake a

detailed reflective study of the development of their group and comparison with such teams in the workplace.

There were several objectives in the development of this teaching strategy, which were all achieved in the implementation of the semi-autonomous study groups. Other outcomes of a more subtle, and arguably even more significant nature, have confirmed the effectiveness of the innovation, particularly in relation to first-year students.

These significant outcomes include better socialisation of first-year students; challenging exposure to diversity issues; training in skills relevant to future employment experience; preparation for self-managed learning and group work within other courses; greater confidence in and responsibility for learning.

This paper describes the strategy adopted, focussing on the personal developmental outcomes in the lives of first-year students.

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THROUGH STUDENTS' EYES

Managing the transition to learning effectively at University

Christine Hogan
Kerry Pedigo

This paper is based on an Australian Commonwealth Grant Project entitled "Through Students' Eyes" in which we researched the problems first year students face and the strategies they use to manage the transition to learning effectively at University. Helping students through the transition from school to university is a key issue facing higher education all over the world. What happens to students in their first few weeks at university can affect the rest of their careers as students. This issue is particularly important now that universities are drawing students from a much wider range of abilities, ethnic backgrounds and socio-economic groups.

The paper tells the 'story of our project so far' to involve students in the design of a workbook and the production of three videos. We have actively involved students in analysing their own learning problems and how they improve and/or develop new skills. In addition we have added other learning strategies to widen their skills and approaches to learning. Previous work in this field has tended to assume a regulated perfect world and treated students as if they were the same. We have used a 'grass roots' approach based on students helping students, as well as including new strategies.

Making new friends can make the transition so much easier. However, this can be stressful. Knowing that other students are also unsure, anxious and uneasy can bring a great sense of relief. Sharing learning experiences can also help students break down the mystique of the university system. The strategies developed incorporate active reflection, diagnoses of problems/issues or plans to change behaviour. The paper is directed at improving learning by enhancing

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the empowerment of students being involved cognitively and emotionally in preventing, identifying and solving learning problems. In this way students will be significantly more motivated to monitor and improve their learning. Further, teaching students transferable transition skills will significantly enhance and develop their life-long learning capabilities.

As the project is in progress we will provide video clips of students to stimulate discussion. In the interactive phase of the session participants will be invited to give feedback and discuss questions e.g. What do you do? Why? What have you tried? What doesn't work? What works?

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A Passport for Whom? First Year Programs for Traditional and Non-Traditional Students at Deakin University, Australia.

Dennis Farrugia & Judy O' Brien

Whenever we speak or write about first year students, we seem to have young, fresh-out-of secondary school students in mind. At Deakin University and probably in many tertiary institutions around the world, the typical first year student is changing. They are becoming more representative of the population at large. That is, they are coming from a much broader range of age, experience, background and geographic locations than ever before. This paper looks at first year students at Deakin University and discusses the programs and services we offer to make the transition to first year more successful.

Ever since its inception, Deakin University has catered for the traditional first year students, the young students progressing from secondary school. In addition, it has also catered for non-traditional students, for example those (often women) who were returning to study after a long absence from formal study or those who lived away from the University. While the traditional students have been relatively easy to target with programs, how does one target students who live thousands of kilometres from the University or who are in some other way, not your typical student.

Student Services has developed a range of programs to assist these groups in their transition.

The programs include:

- Stepping Stones -three day orientation program for new distance education students;
- One day Orientation Workshops;
- Telephone Conferences;
- Mature Age Orientation Workshops & follow-up support groups
- Essay Writing and Examination Preparation Workshops;
- Study Skills Publications eg. Essay Writing Book & Video, Information Sheets on Time Management, Effective Reading Skills, Exam Preparation etc.;
- Supplemental Instruction (SI)- being trialled in School of Law.

In addition, Student Services offers a variety of support services for all students. These services and their effectiveness will be discussed.

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BRIDGING THE GAP TO UNIVERSITY EDUCATION: USING A MENTOR SYSTEM FOR FRESHMEN

mrs. dr. J. Snippe
mrs. drs. I.M.J.M. Emmerik

ABSTRACT

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Introduction

In the Dutch system for higher education there appears to be a gap between pre-university education and university education. Students who enter university have to deal with a totally different situation: they exchange the safe environment of the classroom for a lecture hall, they have to deal with large amounts of study material, they have to manage their own time, plan their own study activities and in most cases they have to learn to live independently. For most of the students this transition from pre-university education to university education is a difficult one. Since the Dutch government wants students to finish their studies without much delay, the pressure is high to make a good start and loose as little time as possible in getting adjusted to the new situation.

At Delft University of Technology all faculties make use of some kind of a mentor system in which second- and third-year students or teachers act as a mentor to a group of freshmen. The mentor groups consist of 8 to 10 freshmen who come together once a week during the first three to four months of the academic year. During these meetings they receive information on the faculty and the curriculum. They learn study skills, principles of time-management, they learn how to plan their study activities and they discuss the content of their studies. For the faculty the most important reason to offer freshmen some sort of counselling to make sure they get relevant information, they get support from fellow-students and from an older and experienced student and to promote the social integration of new students. The mentor system also has a monitoring function: early detection of students with problems or difficulties will be possible and help can be provided in an early stage.

Future mentors receive a training to prepare them to their task. This training is given by members of the educational development unit in co-operation with members of the Student Advisory Office.

In this session we will present two papers concerning the mentor system. In the first paper we will discuss an evaluation study performed to find an effective way of preparing students to their role as a mentor. The second paper concentrates on the results of a project in which teachers together with students operated as a mentor team. An evaluation has been performed to examine the effects of this combination.

1. Evaluation of a training for future mentors

Future mentors attend a two-days training in which they receive information and practice. The following subjects are part of the training:

a) time-management and planning of study activities;
b) information on the first-year course programme;
c) holding a conversation;
d) learning to use their own experience from the period they were freshmen themselves;
e) referring students with problems to the right professional.

A group of 15 future mentors who attended the training completed an extensive questionnaire, previous to and after the training. A few weeks after the training they filled in a third questionnaire to get information on the transfer of knowledge to practice.
The results show that future mentors feel they are well prepared to their task, as a result of the training. However, they would like the theoretical part of the training to be reduced and they would like to get more information on the first-year course programme. They also need more information on group dynamics. Besides that they express the need for follow-up meetings with the trainer to discuss problems they encounter during the mentorate.
The hardest part of being a mentor seems to be to keep providing freshmen with useful information and to keep conversation going after a while.

2. Evaluation of a mentor system in which teachers and students operate as a mentor team

The Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Marine Technology decided to set up a new mentor system in which teachers and students operate as a mentoring team. All freshmen are grouped and assigned to a teacher and a second- or third-year student. During their weekly meetings they make a planning of study activities and receive feedback on their planning behaviour from the previous week. They also discuss study skills and study strategies. For the faculty the mentor groups have an important evaluation function since students report on the course programme and problems in the organization of the curriculum. Both teachers and students receive a training in order to be prepared for their task.
An evaluation study has taken place by giving a questionnaire to the teachers ($n=20$) and students ($n=17$) who were mentor and to the freshmen ($n=134$). The results of the evaluation study show that both teacher- and student mentors feel they have been able to stimulate the freshmen and make them enthusiastic for their studies. The teachers also feel their commitment to the faculty has grown as a consequence of their mentor-role; they value the personal contact with freshmen. The freshmen indicate that the mentor group has a social function but they do not feel it has any effect on their study behaviour. A large majority feels that the combination of a teacher- and a student-mentor has been a fruitful one.

EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
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The Introductory Economics Class as a Vehicle for Freshman Success and Retention

Rhona C. Free

Abstract

Introductory Economics classes are generally viewed with dread and trepidation by freshmen, yet these classes can be designed to have a very positive effect on freshman success and retention. This session summarizes findings about factors that affect student performance in Introductory Economics, presents a model of an Introductory Economics course that uses a range of active learning tools and other practices, and involves workshop participants in exercises used in the class. Participants will consider how freshman-level courses in other disciplines can use similar exercises to help students learn the subject, develop writing, quantitative, and computer skills, and adjust to the university environment.

An unpleasant and unsuccessful experience as a freshman in an Economics course not only affects retention, but for those students who remain in school, it makes it unlikely that they will adopt Economics as a major. In the interest of attracting majors as well as for the broader university goals of freshman retention and success, it behooves economists to design the first courses in economics so that they are not screening devices but opportunities for freshman to see how economics can be useful, interesting, and comprehensible. A similar rationale would apply for introductory courses in other disciplines that freshmen find difficult. Fortunately, a range of teaching practices that promote active learning can be implemented that accomplish the success/retention/recruitment-to-major goals while ensuring that necessary knowledge and skills are acquired.

Active learning methods can be combined with standard lecture to create a class that students find interesting and challenging and in which they can develop a wide range of skills. Generally, active learning requires students to comlete in class or outside of class time an exercise in which they apply subject matter. Exercises can be carefully constructed to emhasize a number of goals; development of quantitative, writing, computer or analytical skills, learning to use library services, career preparation, learning to work in groups, helping students see the relevance of a subject to their own lives, etc. The purpose of each exercise is to enhance the students' learning of the subject matter while simultaneously accomplishing one of the other goals.

Three exercises will be completed by the participants. The first is used on the first day of class. Participants are divided into groups and each group is given a folder. In a class these folders belong to the students who are in the group and will be their group folder for the rest of the semester. The

folder is used on the first day to accomplish several goals:

* distribute course material
* develop a positive classroom climate
* help students see the relevance of the subject to their lives
* help them learn basic economic terms and concepts (factors of production, market economy, income distribution)

The second exercise is aimed at helping students understand a very important but difficult economic concept- the law of diminishing returns. Participants complete a simple production process (using envelopes, a mailing list, and scrap paper) using different numbers of workers. In a class, students record data, apply formulas to the data, interpret their findings. The goals of this exercise are to:

* develop quantitative, writing and analytical skills
* help students understand the law and the related concepts of marginal product, average product and total product

Exercise three combines data search by computer, videotape and oral history. A clip from a videotape about the 1930's Depression is shown. Students are given instructions to obtain historical data from the Economic Report of the President that shows what happened to unemployment and output in the 1930's. They must write a one-page explanation of how their grandparents managed during the Depression. Participants will complete a modeified version of the exercie. Goals of the exercise are to:

* develop computer, research and writing skills
* help students learn the concepts of unemployment, national output, Gross Domestic Product and inflation

The use of a wide range of teaching tools and learning opportunities gives students with different learning styles more opportunity to acquire knowledge and demonstrate mastery of the subject matter. Skills transferable to other classes can be developed, improving students' overall success and thereby improving retention. And, not least important, students are much more likely to enjoy their economics class. While the nature of the exercises will vary across disciplines, in most introductory classes it should be possible to use some active learning tools. Participants will spend some time revising the three exercises to be appropriate for other discipline. A list of references related to active learning useful to instructors in various disciplines will be distributed.

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East Tennessee State University

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Building Campus Community with Freshman Cohorts

Cynthia S. Burnley

ABSTRACT

A partnership between the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs enhances the experience of first semester freshmen and provides community building opportunities for both commuting and residential students at East Tennessee State University. Two types of cohort programs are available for traditional (Academic Advantage) and non-traditional students (First Year Program). Opportunities for forming community relationships result from a maximum of 25 students enrolling in the same sections of four courses: a one-hour Freshman Year Experience (FYE) course, an entire section of English composition, and two larger enrollment courses composed of cohort members and non-cohort students.

The cohort program facilitates the development of community in numerous ways. The FYE instructors provide a base for community building by conducting get acquainted exercises and providing a mechanism for students to contact each other outside of class. The cohort participants attend four different classes together and are more likely to become acquainted further, which is advantageous for both commuting and residential students. By participating in courses composed entirely of their cohort, freshmen are able to identify other members of the cohort and become more comfortable with each other early in the semester. The complement of courses provides a common experience on which new relationships may be initially based and facilitates the development of study groups. The cohort provides a sense of community for freshmen who are enrolled in large sections of courses and diminishes the possibility that they could get "lost in the crowd." Students in the FYE course are required to attend a number of campus events and are encouraged to attend together. Casual observations of instructors and advisors and student and faculty evaluations reveal the importance of the cohort to the establishment of freshmen friendships and positive attitudes about their first semester experience at the university.

Upper-class student leaders serve as peer instructors to assist the FYE professors with grading, teaching, and bridging the communication gap between freshmen and faculty. Peer instructors are also positive role models and enable freshmen to become acquainted with at least one upper-class student leader.

The presentation will cover the development and coordination of each program.

recruitment and advisement of student participants; training and selection of faculty; selection, responsibilities and credit for peer instructors; successes and areas for improvement; course content; evaluation of the programs; and how the nontraditional and traditional student programs differ. Materials prepared for recuiting participants (video and advertisement) will be shared with attendees.

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The General Education Program as a Retention Strategy

Linda D. Doran
Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
East Tennessee State University

ABSTRACT

In implementing a new General Education Program, East Tennessee State University is also employing a new retention strategy. The challenge and purpose of East Tennessee State's general education program serve two paramount goals:

> First, they seek to ensure that students who earn the baccalaureate degree possess those basic proficiencies that denote an educated person and one suitable for employment. Second, East Tennessee State's general education aims to ensure that graduates understand information and modes of investigation that will permit them to continue to learn, to see relationships and verify learning experiences, and to find their own voices. This understanding will enable students to adapt to change, to appreciate cultural variation, and to show respect and suspend judgment toward others when exploring different viewpoints and alternatives to problems.

Reinforcing writing, oral communication, and technology proficiencies throughout the academic major as well as in the General Education Core itself is a major characteristic of the program. The "across-the-curriculum" proficiency emphases are anchored in first-year foundation experiences and extend through degree completion. Requiring writing, communication, and technology "intensive" courses in the undergraduate major engages all faculty in curriculum building, advisement, and assessment of program effectiveness.

With respect to the first goal -- to found and to reinforce proficiency in writing, oral communication, and using technology -- East Tennessee State has instituted the following in support of the General Education program:

- curriculum development to ensure that writing, oral communication, and information technology use will be integral and significant parts of courses so designated by their departments as "intensive" in proficiency reinforcement;
- a University Writing and Communication Center for student support;
- a University Teaching and Learning Center providing faculty professional development to improve teaching in general education; and
- a plan for the assessment of the effectiveness of the General Education Program.

The University is committing significant resources to ensure a successful general education program, to an improved undergraduate experience, and to strengthened retention. Implicit in the changed approach to general education are practices which address retention. Primary emphases and resources are being placed on improving advisement, making qualitative changes in teaching and learning, increasing the use of instructional technology, and greatly enhancing student access to open computer labs.

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Eastern Washington University
at Cheney and Spokane

Presenter:
Christina Salisbury
Director of Freshman Seminars
Eastern Washington University

Presenter:
Curt Bishop
Outdoor Program Intern
Eastern Washington University

Academic and Recreational Freshman Seminars at Eastern Washington University: The Saga of our Struggles and Successes

Five years ago, with the support of a Federal Grant, Eastern Washington University offered its first freshman seminars. They were successful in many ways but failed to generate sufficient interest to make them accepted as fundamental courses by the entire university community.

The next year staff, students and faculty members who were involved in Eastern's highly successful Outdoor Program (Associated Student Body supported recreational activities programming and equipment rental office) and who also believed strongly in the freshman seminar concept, offered several freshman seminars that used rock climbing and mountaineering as focus activities, while still presenting traditional student services and orientation materials to students. These courses received attention in the press and were extremely popular among incoming students and their parents. But problems of financing, scheduling, the need for wider new student participation, and making freshman seminars an accepted and fundamental part of our curriculum remained.

This Fall Quarter 1995 we added an Outdoor Program freshman seminar in Canoeing and also seminars based on several of our most popular academic programs: Education, the Sciences, and Fine Arts. We changed the overall scheduling of freshman seminars, revised their internal schedule, their credit and the way they are financed. This has improved student participant as well as faculty and staff satisfaction. The changes were highly successful, and while fine-tuning is still needed, the university staff, faculty and

administration realize we have hit upon a workable structure for this university on which to build into the future.

Our presentation details through slides, written materials and discussions where we are, how we arrived, and many of the key elements of structure, scheduling, budgets, fees, faculty and staff participation that have assured that our freshman seminars are here to stay.

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Perry Higman, Director, Honors
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Hargreaves 204
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Brief biography of presenters:

Christina Salisbury began attending Eastern Washington University in the Fall of 1994 as one of eighteen students to receive a Presidential Scholarship in the Honors Program. She was one of three to have this scholarship renewed in the form of a Trustee's Scholarship. She participated in Freshman Seminars as a student leader and is very involved with the school and community. Eastern began exploring ways to give students opportunities to gain administrative experience in programs of interest to them, and Christina was made the Director of Freshman Seminars in the academic year 1995-1996 under the guidance of Dr. Perry Higman.

Curt Bishop became involved with the ASEWU Outdoor Program as a Recreation and Leisure Studies student. Based on skills developed through his degree studies and Outdoor Program activities, Curt has been a river guide in Colorado, a mountain guide for local outdoor schools, a general resource for the Cheney and Spokane community and has done a number of significant climbs in the West. Five years ago, Curt was invited to help with the first Outdoor Program Freshman Seminar. Since then, he has led and assisted with the field sessions. He has led Outdoor Program student trips to Canada, the American Rockies, the Southwest and Mexico, and has been a presenter at numerous Outdoor Program conferences.

The Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois: A Unique Illinois Preservice Teacher Induction Program

A Proposal for "Ninth International Conference on the First-Year Experience"

Submitted by

Dr. Victoria Davis,

Golden Apple Foundation for Excellence in Teaching
Chicago, Illinois

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Abstract: This presentation details a unique teacher preservice induction program that includes recruitment, selection, preparation and support of mostly minority or low income high school graduates from the entire state of Illinois. The students, referred to as Golden Apple Scholars, attend one of 22 participating universities in Illinois while engaging in work study experiences in school settings, three residential summer teaching internships, one camp counseling experience and mentoring activities designed to ensure retention, teacher accreditation, and graduation. Scholars receive financial and counseling support from the Foundation in return for teaching for five years in a pre-K through 12 public or nonpublic school in Illinois.

This presentation will utilize charts, graphs, the results of three external program evaluations, and audience participation to explain the unique qualities of the program, the lessons learned from seven years of the program, as well as the program's impact on the future of the profession. The quality and content of the Summer Institutes will be shared with the audience.

Presentation: The Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois is a model teacher preservice induction program that has made an impact on the perception of teaching as a profession and on the recruitment and retention of minority and low income teacher candidates for Illinois schools. Sponsored by the Illinois State Board of Education and the Board of Higher Education, this unique foundation-university partnership is responsible for recruiting and retaining minority teachers to the teaching profession: currently, the Scholars number 281 in a program that is 63% minority and 65% low income with an 88% retention rate. Recruiting over 800 nominations each year, the program selects 60 Scholars for its cohort. Scholars must compete for their position with income, family size, class rank, ACT score and high school grade point average factoring into the selection--but the most important factor is a personal interview that determines the student's desire to teach in economically underserved areas.

By 1997, the 60 Scholars of the Class of 1993 will be prepared to teach in some of the most difficult classrooms in Illinois. Their preparation includes hundreds of hours of teaching practicum, observation and training that supplements the college's educational curriculum with coursework taught by experienced Golden Apple teachers. The impact of the Scholars on the classrooms of tomorrow will be as catalysts for change in the Illinois school system for the Scholars are mature, poised individuals who work with a peer cohort, receive mentoring from experience, award winning teachers. They are leaders in their high schools and at their universities who are able to articulate why they are in these classrooms.

The early experience they receive includes hand-on experiences in Chicago area public and nonpublic schools in multicultural, multiethnic urban schools. Since the Foundation makes a ten year commitment to support the Scholar from recruitment through the first five years of teaching, Scholar success in the classroom is assured. The first three classes of Scholars are teaching in the Chicago metro area. Results of their successes will be shared.

HENDERSON STATE UNIVERSITY

EXCELLENCE • SPIRIT • TRADITION

The Henderson Freshman Seminar: "Reddie" for Success

Martha Dale Cooley
George Ann Stallings
Gene Mueller

ABSTRACT

The "Reddie," our mascot, symbolizes Henderson State University spirit. Continuing with this idea, the goal of the Henderson Seminar is to cultivate each student's readiness for success--"Reddie" for Success.

Because HSU's mission statement is directly tied to retention, we have targeted the group of students whose ACT scores fall below 19 as the students who would benefit the most form HSU's Freshman Seminar. Every effort is made to integrate these students into the academic and social experience at HSU.

The presentation will begin with a video: "HSU Freshman Success Video." The video incorporates classroom vignettes and student interviews. This video serves as an orientation to the course.

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ABSTRACT
The Henderson Freshman Seminar:
"Reddie" for Success
Page 2

The presenters will then focus on the following:

1. innovative teaching techniques
2. collaborative learning exercises
3. computer literacy exercises
4. critical thinking skills
5. reward mechanisms
6. evaluation of student success measured by grade point average, ACT score, and retention.

The kind of evaluation we are interested in centers on student success, measured by grade point average and retention. Data is collected on each student individually, to made certain reporting is accurate. From the data we determine relationships between ACT scores and grade point averages, as well as the returning percentage of students who succeeded in the Henderson Seminar. It is our intention to use the data as a vehicle to strengthen the seminar.

Following the presentation, there will be a general discussion on the above as well as the following:

1. mandatory peer groups and "task forces" formed to encourage social interaction through mentoring and peer tutoring
2. a capsule of the speakers used in the classes
3. the agonies of meeting the class only once a week

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INDIANA UNIVERSITY
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INDIANAPOLIS

The Urban University First Year Experience: Building Community Benefits Faculty and Other University Professionals and Serves Students Well

Scott E. Evenbeck, Ph.D.,
Associate Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Education
Director, Undergraduate Education Center

Mary C. Foster
Associate Director, Undergraduate Education Center

UNDERGRADUATE
EDUCATION CENTER

IUPUI

The urban university has a particular responsibility to address the needs of students who come to the university underprepared in some way. In a context where many students feel isolated and alienated from the academic culture, restructuring efforts that allow for the development of personal connections between faculty in the departments and beginning students can be very powerful. If, in addition, the restructuring efforts bring together faculty, academic advisors, university librarians, and information technology professionals and student mentors in collaborative settings, it becomes possible to break down the isolation and alienation that exists within the academy.

Beginning students at large universities are most vulnerable to failure because they do not perceive themselves to be part of an academic department nor to be connected in other ways to the university. These undergraduates require particular attention regardless of admission status and levels of academic preparation. New models, however, must be developed which take advantage of the expertise of professional staff in all areas of the university who have responsibility for addressing the needs of undergraduate students.

The IUPUI Undergraduate Education Center (UEC), a centralized academic advising unit, has developed programs and services to help new students at the university strengthen reading, writing and math skills, learn how to study in college, and learn what will be required of them in order to make progress toward graduation. Many of the UEC initiatives have focused on strategies for linking the work of the academic advisors in the UEC with the work of the faculty in the colleges. Learning Communities, for example, provide a structure for linking a study skills or a writing course with an introductory level course in a discipline such as Psychology or Anthropology. UEC advisors, university instructors, and student mentors work within the learning communities to help students meet the expectations of the discipline-based courses while providing a

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context for academic support services. When departmental faculty are involved in such programs, the retention of students improves greatly. When only advisors and part time faculty interact with first semester students, the retention rates remain fairly constant. The connection to departmental faculty is critical; the opportunity for beginning students to interact, in an instructional context as well as in a personal context, with full time faculty who are committed to student success is also very important.

In developing the first year experience program, we were committed to continuing with the development of teams of faculty, advisors and student mentors and removing the barriers that exist between instruction and support services. We felt that the key to discovering how best to help students thrive at the university would be to develop close links between new students and the faculty and staff who will be responsible for ensuring that they graduate from the university.

The faculty in the program who have worked closely with other professionals to help students get connected with the university community and begin using its resources, have made their teaching a "public activity" opening their classrooms to advisors and student mentors, bringing in resource staff from the writing center, from the computer clusters, and from external agencies. In addition, they have become student advocates and are working within the university to strengthen programs and resources, revise policies and procedures, and improve services.

Individual faculty members cannot use the full resources of the university if they remain isolated in planning and implementing first year courses. The complexity and mushrooming opportunities of informational and technological resources can overwhelm professors as well as students. Additionally, academic planning, particularly for first generation students and students of non-traditional age, is difficult to oversee without the assistance of professional advisors.

Instructional teams that include faculty, students, librarians, academic advisors, and media specialists incorporate multiple areas of expertise in the university in a new mode of curriculum development that is responsive to the ways that knowledge is now produced and shared. This coalition of partners ensures that the courses developed will offer students all the available resources for learning in the university.

The presenters will describe the pilot first year experience program, the process of facilitating the development of the instructional teams, and the outcomes described by faculty and staff. Discussion will focus on ways of developing and strengthening instructional teams and other means of facilitating collaboration and team building among faculty and other university professionals.

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

TITLE Mentoring as Self-directed Learning: Enhancing Student Success

PRESENTERS Deborah L. Cullen, EdD; Indiana University
Gaye Luna, EdD; Northern Arizona University

When students transition to higher education, there are a variety of concerns and issues which arise. Mentoring is a viable strategy for assisting adult learners through transitions. Mentoring as a support mechanism is "activity of holding, of providing a place where the student can contact his/her need for fundamental trust, the bases of growth" (Daloz, 1986, p. 215). This includes listening, providing structure, expressing positive expectations, and sharing oneself. This presentation will advance mentoring as a means to allow these qualities to exist in a relationship where the protégé self-directs his or her development with the assistance of a mentor.

SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES

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ABSTRACT

Implementing a First-Year Bridge Program for Native Students at the College Level: A Collaborative Effort

A major educational objective for Canada's First Nations is to increase the number of Native students at the post-secondary level. For the past six years Kativik School Board, responsible for Inuit education in Nunavik (Arctic Quebec), and John Abbott College, a post-secondary institution in Montreal, have developed and successfully implemented a College Adaptation Program (CAP) aimed at achieving this objective. The development and implementation of the CAP during this period represents the final stage of a comprehensive support system which has been in place since 1979.

Prior to the implementation of the CAP in 1990, the major objective of the Student Services department of Kativik School Board was to provide social, personal and career counseling in order to reduce the difficulties experienced by students trying to adapt to the demands of social and academic life in a large urban environment. While Kativik School Board was able to provide support in several areas, direct academic support was the exclusive domain of various post-secondary institutions. As such, there were no special programs in place to assist first-year students. Consequently, the pass and retention rate among this particular group was extremely low.

In order to increase the pass and retention rate of first-year Inuit students, Kativik School Board approached John Abbott College in the Fall of 1990 with a proposal to establish a College Adaptation Program. With funding from both the Kativik School Board and the Quebec Government, this program was designed to develop the language and academic skills necessary to enable first-year students to experience success at the post-secondary level.

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The major component of the CAP is 'sheltered' classes, based on an English for Academic Purposes model. For some first-year courses, Inuit students, who speak English as a second language, are sheltered from first language students in order to provide a non-threatening academic environment within which language and academic skills can be developed. There are two types of 'sheltered' classes. The first is an English course which introduces students to major concepts of literature. The second is an 'adjunct' class which is primarily a study skills course emphasizing the academic skills needed to pass specific content courses such as psychology and history. The objectives of the adjunct class are determined by the regular content course to which it is linked. Thus, first-year students attending John Abbott College follow a program which combines 'regular' and 'sheltered' courses. In addition, all first-year students attend an intensive two-week College Preparation Program (CPP) just prior to the Fall semester. The CPP is organized as a 'sheltered' content-based study skills course designed to introduce students to the post-secondary academic environment.

Kativik School Board and John Abbott College have worked closely since 1990 to develop and implement the College Adaptation Program. As a result, the pass and retention rates of first-year students have increased dramatically. In fact, this program is one of the most successful Native post-secondary programs in Canada.

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JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY
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Ninth International Conference on the First-Year Experience
15 - 19 July 1996, St. Andrews, Scotland

One Year Exchange Students as First-Year Students: John Carroll University's Exchange Programs with Japan

When international students arrive at a U.S. campus for the first time and for only one year it poses particular challenges and opportunities for students and institutions alike. This presentation reports on John Carroll University's exchange program with two Japanese universities since 1987. The presentation will include information on John Carroll students in Japan and particularly on the experiences of Japanese students at John Carroll University. Information on administrative procedures that have evolved in running this program, demographic profile of these students, their academic performance based on their grades, concerns expressed in exit interviews, orientation and host family programs, and anecdotal evidence of their contributions to their respective campuses will be included.

A segment of this presentation will include a taped interview with four Japanese students who have spent the 1995-1996 academic year at John Carroll University who will provide first hand information on their experience at the university and how they propose to integrate it with the rest of their program on returning to Japan. The interview will be conducted by the Director of Study Abroad and myself.

This presentation is designed to encourage participant interaction and discussion for possible application of the presentation to one's own campus and experience with international students.

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FYE Faculty Institute: Educating the Educators

Presenter: Pamela S. Backes
First-Year Student Advisor

When I presented at the conference in Ireland two years ago, I spoke of the effect of Keene State College's innovative approach to the First-Year Experience on such quantifiable measures as retention and graduation rates. From the audience's comments and questions, it became clear that what they really wanted was information on *how* we do what we do. Last year in England, I presented an overview of the program, touching on such issues as gaining institutional support, recruiting faculty and associates, and integrating out-of-classroom experiences. From that presentation, and my musings since, I have come to believe that the key to Keene State's program is the FYE Institute, the subject of this year's presentation.

First, a brief history of the program....

In 1986, Keene State College took a rather novel approach to the First-Year Experience. Rather than create a College 101 course to help students make the transition to campus, traditional first-year courses, such as Introduction to Psychology and Fundamentals of Speech, were revamped to encompass the three primary goals of the fledgling program:

1) *Engage students actively in the learning process;*
2) *Extend students' learning beyond the classroom;*
3) *Enrich students' first semester experience at KSC.*

These three goals were designed to help students make a successful transition both socially *and* academically.

This was no simple feat. To ask faculty to scrap their syllabi then rebuild them to include these concepts...and share their classroom with faculty associates; to find staff members interested in serving as associates ...and supervisors willing to free up staff time to do so; to find resources to train both faculty and associates regarding learning style issues, student development concepts and active learning strategies took a great deal of energy, innovation and perseverance.

The combination of a creative and tenacious FYE Coordinating Team, an enthusiastic cadre of faculty and staff, and a supportive administration overcame these considerable obstacles and the Keene State College FYE Program has been successfully clipping along ever since. Never content with the *status quo*, we have continued to tinker with the program, trying a one-credit College 101-esque seminar in 1992 and a three-credit pilot core course for all first-year students for Fall 1993, only to realize that the original model was the most successful in helping our students make the transition to KSC. The only change that has proven consistently successful is recruiting upper-level students as faculty associates rather than staff.

Never ones to leave well enough alone, however, this fall we will be offering a five-week Extended Orientation program, in conjunction with FYE classes, designed to help students see the connections between their academic and social lives at college and to assist them with goal-setting. The weekly seminars are being developed by members of the Division of Student Affairs and FYE Coordinating Team...or both, in my case.

The Coordinating Team is also responsible for the annual FYE Institute, which (like almost every other aspect of the program) has been tinkered with over the years, but always returns to the same basic tenets: 1) faculty need assistance and support to redesign their traditional classes, especially with incorporating new teaching strategies and transition issues; 2) it is extremely important that the student and staff associates who will be part of the class be involved in this redesign process; 3) everyone learns better, and enjoys learning more, when actively engaged; and 4) it never hurts to have a little fun in the process. (Part 4 is my job.)

To summarize, Keene State College's innovative approach to first-year student programming -- incorporating student-transition strategies into traditional academic courses -- has proven very successful. The key to this program is the annual FYE Institute which is designed to help faculty and their student or staff associates rethink the traditional course format to include innovative teaching techniques, campus resources, and out-of-classroom experiences...as well as content.

The goal of this presentation will be to describe Keene State College's innovative approach to first-year programming, emphasizing the annual FYE Institute. Handouts will supplement the presentation.

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Lander
UNIVERSITY

Academic Advising Center

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Presentation Title:

Collaborative Intervention Techniques for Probation Students

Presenter:
Hollace R. Hubbard

Abstract:

Lander University, a small liberal arts university, pools campus-wide resources to offer students on academic probation an intervention program. Faculty, Instructional Services staff, student affairs personnel, and academic advisors work together to help students on academic probation find individualized techniques to effectively improve their grade point ratio (GPR) as well as enhance their opportunities for graduation. Advising Center workshops, faculty advisor contacts, mentoring by faculty and staff, use of Peer Instructors in the college study skills course, use of study skills workshops early in the semester, individualized academic contracts for success, free academic tutoring, and counseling for personal as well as career difficulties are among the services available to these students. This program, the Student Academic Success Program (SASP), shows success in retaining promising students who need an academic "wake-up call." Many of these students are freshmen who thought that college would be like high school.

With a population of 3000 students, Lander is able to offer those students the attentive atmosphere of a small university. Initially, each student on academic probation completes study skills and personal influences information sheets prior to seeing an advisor in an individualized conference.

Transcripts are reviewed in advance so that course recommendations are not hasty but well planned, and potential problems can be discussed with appropriate faculty or staff. Carefully chosen advisors make recommendations about the courses students should repeat for a better grade, which study skill enhancements are needed (i.e., which workshops to attend), and the minimum grade in each course that must be achieved to get off of probation. During individualized sessions with students, it is often found that some personal obstacle has prevented the student from performing his/her best and that psychological counseling may be necessary. Other students find that they are pursuing the wrong major.

Several levels of intervention focus on students' various needs for intrusive action. The most intrusive contracts target students with a GPR lower than 1.5 (on a 4.0 scale) who are invited to enroll in a college study skills course with special encouragement to those with GPR lower than 1.0. These students also have a faculty or staff mentor (a person other than their advisor) who encourages and motivates them. All probation students are also encouraged to get tutors for their more difficult courses through the Academic Support Center which provides tutoring free of charge. Students with a GPR of 1.5 and above are counseled about coursework to repeat, workshops to attend, and academic tutoring services to seek. Each student is encouraged to meet with an academic advisor regularly. Research shows that faculty interaction with students is an important factor in retention and matriculation. One encouraging spin-off has been that several academic divisions are now holding special mentoring sessions with the probation students within their disciplines, providing more opportunities for students to interact with professors in their major.

In an interactive session, detailed analysis of data and program assessment will be shared as well as program materials. Discussion of our successes and failures will follow.

Lander
UNIVERSITY

Instructional Services

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Presentation Title:

Peer Instructors: Mentors, Role Models, and Facilitators

Presenter:

Gay S. Coleman

Abstract:

The ordinary study skills course is revived by the use of Peer Instructors (PIs)--juniors and seniors who have a proven academic success record. These upper classmen help students apply newly acquired study strategies to their current coursework. The hands-on experience of application, in addition to the sharing of ideas about effective study strategies, emerges from this comfortable atmosphere. It is safe to say that any study skills course and text can be adapted to include Peer Instructors. Course instructors will have the convenience of using their same materials but have the added advantage of assistance in the classroom with students who may not be motivated enough to try the techniques on their own. The addition of PIs to the instructional format makes a normally boring and tedious course one that is truly helpful because the individuals (and the fact that they are students) are not forgotten. As for finding Peer Instructors, college and university campuses abound with students who are academically qualified and eager to help their fellow students, making it an easy task.

The conceptualization for this particular innovative approach to study skills enhancement evolved at a small liberal arts university. The Instructional Services faculty saw the need to form an academic intervention plan specifically for students who were on academic probation with a grade point ratio of less than 1.5 (out of a 4.0 scale). The plan includes the study skills course, faculty or staff mentors, and intensive, intrusive advising methods. The majority of students reflected in this target group are freshmen; however, other students may enroll in the study skills course with permission. Students are "invited" into the course during an individualized conference.

The classroom experience offers at most a 6 : 1 ratio of students to Peer Instructor. These small groups allow for the open expression of ideas, problems, and survival techniques, as well as for excellent role modeling opportunities. The Peer Instructors help their groups with motivational tasks and case studies to help them apply problem solving strategies to real-life situations. An assignment portfolio keeps students active outside of class as well and, once again, involves the application of new skills to other coursework. The students seem much happier and the end-of-semester surveys show that 100% of the students who have had the restructured course like having the Peer Instructors as part of the course.

The presentation will be highly interactive and include materials used in the course as well as in the hiring and training of the Peer Instructors. Data showing the success rates of the students and the assessment of the program will be included.

The Adjustment to College: Students with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)

Lynda J. Katz, Ph.D.

While attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder is commonly diagnosed in childhood (prevalence rates of between 10% and 20% are reported among the school age population), it has not been until the recent past that the disorder has been recognized to significantly affect the lives of adolescents as well as young and older adults. A major life transition for young adults is often not only their entrance into college but also their retention after matriculation. This major life change for young persons with ADHD can present problems in adjustment that go beyond those experienced by their non ADHD peer group. The reasons are multiple: the presence of co-morbid disorders, the failure of previously acquired coping mechanisms to continue to function efficaciously, earlier decisions that precluded the use of psychopharmacological interventions, the loss of sustaining support systems, the non-structured nature of the college environment. As a result of these factors, the nature of the disorder itself and the students' desire often times to "de-identify", there is a tendency for students with ADHD to fall through the cracks and end up on academic probation with dismissal as the worse case scenario or to never achieve at their true academic potential in other instances. There are particular coping strategies and interventions that must find their way into the college student with ADHD repertoire of skills and behaviors. Among these are self-knowledge, dealing with issues of denial, education about the disorder itself, a sound knowledge about medication - what it can and cannot do, an understanding of the implications of substance abuse on the disorder, how to acquire time management and necessary study skills, how to self advocate, and how to utilize a support system that works. This presentation will focus on these coping strategies and interventions.

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TITLE OF PRESENTATION: Connecting Theory to Practice

PRESENTERS: Sharon Silverman, Ed.D.
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ABSTRACT

The TRPP model for effective practice was recently developed by the presenters to provide a new way of thinking about what we do. Much of what we do in learning assistance is already well-founded in theory connected with research upon which we have developed principles to guide us in practice. But, we are not always consciously aware of how this occurs. As professionals, we must have a heightened awareness of why we do what we do. We need to have a full understanding of our professional behavior, to be able to predict outcomes based on sound principles and know why some actions are successful with one student in one setting and not in another. The complexity of our work demands this.

TRPP stands for theory, research, principles, and practice which are four main components of the framework. These components interact to help us understand why we do what we do and why one approach may be more effective than another. A process of critical reflection which focuses on the four components and leads to the goal of maximizing student potential is essential to TRPP. A graphic representation of the model is attached.

Our session will include a description of the model by applying it to principles for practice organized into two categories: Who is th learner? and What is the teaching/learning process?. Using these questions, we will first demonstrate how TRPP can be applied by giving examples of how theory, research and practice connect within each principle. We will then facilitate an interactive, small group experience where members of the audience apply the model to their own practice.

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Learning Resource Center

A Passport to Success: Beyond the First-Year Experience

Karen Carmichael
Roberta Rubin
Joanna Boval
Jon Scott

We believe that a strong first-year experience is the cornerstone of a successful college career. However, we have found that there *is* life after the first-year experience. This strategically based workshop highlights LMU's innovative and multifaceted program which begins in a student's first year and continues to support students as their needs evolve over their college careers. Our dynamic approach combines metacognitive and student development theory. Building on the successes of our first-year program, we adapt the variety and intensity of our services so students deepen their understanding of what works for them as learners -- and what doesn't.

We will introduce you to the support mechanisms that are in place at our Learning Resource Center. The key goals of these services are to:

- foster student independence,
- broaden student awareness of his or her learning styles, and
- increase student understanding of study strategies in order to facilitate mastery of course material

Our workshop will be valuable whether you have a long-standing first-year program or whether you are considering putting one in place. You will leave our workshop with valuable program information, enabling you to adapt, design, and expand such programs on your own campuses.

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LUND UNIVERSITY

Use of Supplemental Instruction to Improve Student Learning in Sweden

Marita Bruzell-Nilsson
Leif Bryngfors

ABSTRACT

This presentation focuses on the use of Supplemental Instruction (SI) to improve student learning and success at Lund University and other universities located in Sweden. Since SI was developed in the United States in 1973, SI has spread to over dozen countries and more than 110 institutions. Since SI is content- and context-specific, each country often adapts the program. The SI program has been especially helpful for improving the learning environment for middle and top quartile students enrolled in historically difficult courses at Lund University.

Rationale for Importance of the Topic:

- This presentation offers solutions to the problem of how to improve student learning. Most of the professional litterature has been focused on how to improve the instructor´s instruction rather than improving student´s learning.
- While conference attendees may have prior knowledge about SI, many would be interested in the use of SI for improving the quality of learning environment.
- A session on SI would provide an opportunity to update the developmental education field on the status of SI at more than 100 institutions in various countries.

Proposed outline of Session Topics

- Provide an overview of the traditional SI model with U.S. and Swedish data. This would provide baseline for understanding the Swedish SI model.
- Describe how the SI program allows the classroom teachers to choose their level of involvment with the program. This allows some professors to become very involved with creating learning communities outside of the classroom.
- Explain how the SI program provides opportunities to integrate the academic content and the social aspects of learning.
- Describe how SI sessions help students to be successful in their studies.

SI targets historically difficult academic courses and offers to all enrolled students regularly scheduled, out-of-class, peer facilitated sessions. SI sessions help foster increased student retention, graduation and academic achievment through use of collaborative learning strategies and appropriate modeling, practice and use of learning strategies that cross academic disciplines. National research studies over the

past decade in U.S. have validated the effectiveness of SI for participating students, despite ethnicity. SI has been successfully implemented at hundreds of other post-secondary institutions across the United States and nine foregin countries over the last decade. SI is one of only two programs validated and recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as contributing to increased student graduation rates

References

Martin, D.C.,& Arendale, D. (1994, Winter). Supplemental Instruction: Increasing achievment and persistence.

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Dean of the Faculty of Liberal Arts

Merrimack College's First Year Seminar and Writing Fellows Programs: Students as Learners and Students as Teachers

Albert C. DeCiccio

Merrimack's First Year Seminar program introduces students to the College's major curricular themes and emphases at the outset of their academic careers. Seminars are not tied to specific disciplines or majors; instead, they cut across disciplines and include material from multiple fields of study. To emphasize the themes of inquiry and conversation on civilization each seminar includes the following: (a) attention to writing; (b) attention to library and investigative skills; (c) utilization of discussion, debate, and dialogue as teaching methodologies; (d) important issues about civilization considered in its broadest aspect; and (e) an emphasis on analytical thinking.

Students are offered a choice among a range of topics, including such courses as the following: *Alternative Models of Health and Disease, How Do You Know That? The Nature of Inquiry, The Politics of Language, Women in American Religion, Science and Technology and the Creation of the Modern World, Women in Business,* and *Love and Death.* While individual courses may follow a variety of methodologies, each course requires students to be actively involved in all phases of the seminar. In true Freirean manner, there is no teacher-of-the-students nor students-of-the-teacher; instead, all members of the seminar teach, learn, and contribute. Ultimately, students become more responsible for their learning and thus take ownership of their

academic affairs from the very first year of their careers.

All seminars emphasize writing, but, as the course titles suggest, not all professors leading seminars are accustomed to teaching writing. As a result, this year the College has instituted a Writing Fellows Program. Designed by the College's Writing Center Director, the Fellows Program takes advantage of the best outcomes of the First Year Seminar Program in order to foster effective writing. Specifically, a writing tutor–who has completed a course, entitled *Theories and Practices of Tutoring Writing,* offered by the Writing Center Director–is assigned to a seminar offered by a professor with whom the tutor has either already taken a seminar or another course. The tutor is a coach to the students in the seminar, nudging them into a collaboration of work that results in effective writing. The tutor is an assistant to the professor, helping him or her by reviewing early drafts of student essays, commenting on the nature of the professor's writing assignments, and, by attending the seminar, contributing to the discussions of the course–especially as they affect how writing assignments are to be completed.

Thus far, the program has resulted in greater College-wide attention to writing in the disciplines. Moreover, the Merrimack community is becoming intrigued by three developments: (1) the teaching and learning environment can be productive when we tap into an unused resource–our students; (2) the more a tutor knows about the discipline he or she is tutoring, the better the advice the tutor can provide; and (3) building a community in which everybody teaches and everybody learns contributes to a more effective retention effort.

There are some concerns that need to be addressed, including the cost of the program (the tutor is either paid a stipend for tutoring, or offered course credit in exchange for tutoring), the mini-teacher-like role students are sometimes assigned, and so forth. However, we believe that the Writing Fellows and First Year Seminar Programs are the kinds of activities that more colleges and universities might wish to pursue if they are indeed serious about fostering effective writing and collaborative learning.

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Missouri Southern State College

Creating a Freshman Year Learning Community in a Commuter College

Dr. Elaine Freeman and Dr. Betsy Griffin

ABSTRACT

Enhancing the freshman year educational experience is the goal of a pilot project underway at Missouri Southern State College. The pilot is the implementation of a proposal designed and submitted by a campus wide Funding for Results Committee to the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education as part of a state initiated program designed to reward Missouri colleges and universities for creative programming to improve the teaching and learning process. Our presentation will include an overview of the implementation, structure and preliminary results of the ongoing project. An interactive discussion will involve participants in considerations of problems and program features which strengthen the impact of learning communities.

The pilot project involved five groups of students who enrolled in block classes characterized by collaborative instruction, the use of active learning strategies, and peer mentoring. Students enrolled in three common core curriculum classes during both the Fall and Spring semesters. The Fall semester blocks included a beginning English Composition, Freshman Orientation and one additional core curriculum class. The Spring semester blocks included the second English Composition class paired with two other core classes. The purpose of taking three classes with the same classmates is to develop a "learning community" atmosphere in a commuter college setting.

The block pilot included 120 first-time freshman students who enrolled during an orientation program for traditional students. A control group of 125 first-time freshman also enrolled in beginning English Composition classes during the Fall 1995 semester was selected for comparison. ACT composite scores for the control and block group were similar with a block group mean of 21.11 and a control group mean of 21.21.

Preliminary data from the student groups and faculty feedback suggests promising results. Ninety-four percent of the block students were enrolled for the Spring semester as compared to 83 percent of the control group. Freshman English grades were significantly higher in the block groups (M = 2.89) than in the control groups (M = 2.58). Overall mean grade point averages were slightly higher for the block students than the control students. For block students, the grades achieved in the three block classes tended to be higher than their overall grade point average..

A student satisfaction survey indicated that freshman in general are satisfied with college services at Missouri Southern. Ninety-four percent of both the block and control groups reported satisfaction with the quality of classroom instruction at MSSC. Block students did indicate greater satisfaction than control students with the times and availability of course offerings at the college. Questions regarding student/college contact indicated that block students more

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frequently participated in class discussion and met to work with other students on class related projects or assignments.

The survey given to the block participants included an additional section of specific questions regarding the block program and a request for comments on the block experience. Responses to this section were overwhelmingly positive. Students' comments indicated they were particularly pleased with friendships made and the comfort level in classes. Some students were somewhat concerned about not meeting more new people during the semester.

Block faculty members were more cautiously optimistic about the project, noting increased levels of attendance and student interaction. A missing component from the faculty perspective was the mature level of class interaction produced by a more heterogeneous mixture of traditional and non-traditional students; the enrollment procedure had resulted block classes with only traditional aged students while the college population is 40% nontraditional. Some concerns also existed regarding the tendency for socializing to overshadow academic endeavors.

The initial evidence is that the Freshman Year Project has experienced considerable success in the first semester. Ongoing research will follow both the block and control groups of students through their academic careers. Though final results are hard to predict, the following comment illustrates the impact the project is having on individual lives.

> I would choose to be a part of the block class again, definitely. I have gotten to know all the students in my block class and consider them to be my friends. It is easy to speak up in class, ask questions, and study with a group being in the block. I honestly feel that being in the block has helped my attendance and eased the difficult transition of the freshman year.

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A Working Model for Student Success: Research, Intervention and Evaluation

The education system in Canada is currently undergoing massive transition due to a combination of decreased funding, technological advancement, and rapidly changing market needs. As enrollments decrease due to funding cutbacks it will become more important than ever to **RETAIN AND GRADUATE AS MANY STUDENTS AS POSSIBLE** in our academic programs. **This will be true from a human potential perspective as well as an economic one.**

Over the last seven years working as both an internal and external consultant I have developed what I call a "**WORKING MODEL FOR STUDENT SUCCESS**" . The model has been or is presently being implemented at a number of colleges and universities in Ontario, including Mohawk , Centennial, George Brown, St. Clair and Ryerson Polytechnic.

The model's strength is its simplicity and easy practical adaptation to any post secondary institution and is based upon three major components:

I) Research,
II) Intervention
III) Evaluation

I) Research

Demographic, early warning, performance and retention data are collected and then cross tabulated for each student in every targeted "high attrition" academic program. **This comprehensive student data base helps to define which students are dropping out of these programs and why.** Results of this data analysis also suggest what intervention strategies would be the most effective to implement in each particular program area.

II) Intervention

Establishing a **"RETENTION PLAN"** for student success within each academic program with the faculty and chair and continuously improving that plan has proven to be the most effective way of both enhancing and sustaining student retention and success.

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Principal areas of focus include **a) the recruitment and selection process; b) student orientation courses and programs; c) early warning systems to help identify "high risk" students and d) curriculum and program of study issues that affect student retention and success.**

III) Evaluation

While many colleges and universities implement retention and success strategies, very few collect student data on a continuous basis, and fewer still "evaluate" the effects of these strategies in any rigorous fashion. Ongoing financial support for these strategies is questionable in the absence of any hard data demonstrating success. **In every success program we help to implement, student retention is measured each and every semester.** This ongoing evaluation demonstrates the value of the strategies that have been implemented.

International Recognition

How successful has this "Working Model for Student Success" been? **From 1989 to 1995 student retention was significantly increased from 12 % to 15 % (year one to year two) in over twenty targeted high attrition programs at Mohawk College.**

This student success model has been presented at numerous provincial, national and international conferences and in 1992 Mohawk College was recognized with a **"RETENTION EXCELLENCE AWARD"** by the Noel-Levitz Centers; the first Canadian college or university to have gained this distinction.

Topics covered will include:

⇒Research, Intervention and Evaluation - the three keys to Student Success

⇒ Creating an effective Retention Information System

⇒ Intervention Strategies that work

⇒ Choosing the right Early Warning System

⇒ The secrets to successful Retention Planning

⇒ Effectively evaluating the strategies you implement

⇒ Achieving early success and building on it

⇒ The Financial Success of retaining additional students

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Sheila Coghill, Ph.D., Professor of English
Coordinator of Core Program
Moorhead State University
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Developing an Undergraduate Core Program: One Aspect of Quality Initiatives

The Core Program at Moorhead State University is now in its third year. It started in 1993 and was developed as an integrative core curricula program within MSU's Liberal Studies program, and it is a program on campus which has been developed in to provide students with an interdisciplinary Liberal Studies experience in their undergraduate education, and as one aspect of a system-wide response for refining a student's overall quality educational experience. **This presentation will cover several areas: the context of the Quality Initiative movement in the State of Minnesota System; the early developmental stages of an Interdisciplinary Core program at MSU; existing Core courses and current status of Core Program; efforts at ongoing and systematizing assessment using the *California Critical Thinking Dispositions Inventory*, and some results; challenges we discovered and dealt with in a time of Institutional changes; prospects and a proposal for the future of the Core Program.**

A discipline by its very nature has inherent limitations, but these can be corrective by the presence of other disciplines. Barriers of structure, language, interaction, and even style tend to cut each field off from all others. But we know that every field of study is enriched by concepts, theories, knowledge and methods from other fields. An old adage holds that a specialist is a person who knows all there is to know about his field except where it fits into the universe. This is one of the intellectual arguments for encouraging an interdisciplinary approach; it is a needed corrective for the limits of every discipline. The value of connecting knowledge of a field with other fields is needed to get beyond the limits of any one discipline, and to help remove the "intellectual blinders" of both professors and students--or perhaps we should say to help broaden their intellectual perspective. So, while historically many Departments are organized along discipline specific lines, scholars have been collaborating more frequently across fields in the past twenty years, so the blurring of many disciplinary boundaries is not news to them--though it may be for their students.

For the past six years, all seven campuses in the Minnesota State University System have participated in what is known as the "Q-7 Experience. The *Q-7 Initiative, initiated in 1990 by the Minnesota State Universities, evolved from a Report of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Access and Quality in the Minnesota State University System. It has since been an on-going effort to emphasize various aspects of academic quality among the state universities. Emphasis has focused on seven indicators which are "student-centered and future oriented." These indicators include: preparation for college, higher order thinking, global understanding, Multicultural perspective, scientific and quantitative literacy, readiness for work and career, and responsible citizenship in a democracy. In the past three years, the Core Program has met five of these seven indicators (we have not yet developed an interdisciplinary course which addresses scientific and quantitative literacy) and has developed, had approved and offered the following Core courses: *The Beautiful and the Good*; *Civilizations and Migrations* (an interdisciplinary course which carries Liberal Studies credits in both Multicultural and Global categories). In development and near the final

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approval stage is a course entitled *The Education of American Minorities as Represented in Literature*; and a course still in the developmental stage: *Ethics in the Workplace*.Since many undergraduate curriculum offerings largely and historically mirror the academic disciplines and their sub-specializations, developing and getting approval for interdisciplinary courses has been a challenge.

Since its inception Q-7 funding of $1. 4 million annually has been derived from earmarked moneys within the state university budget. Thus, MSU has tried to address this need for greater intellectual integration through its Core Program. At present the Core Course on *The Beautiful and the Good* was balanced and "corrected" in development by faculty from the following disciplines: English, Philosophy, Humanities, Music, Speech & Theater, Mass Communications, and Health and Physical Education. Likewise, the Core Course on *Civilizations and Migrations* was developed by faculty from Economics, Political Science, International Relations, and Business Management. The course on *The Education of American Minorities* has been developed by faculty from English, Secondary Education and Elementary Education. And the course on *Ethics in the Workplace* is being developed by faculty from Nursing, Philosophy, Accounting, Industrial Studies, Social Work, Philosophy, and English.

In its early stages, the Core Program largely faced developmental concerns especially regarding issues of new course development, acceptance and approval (on a pedagogical level as well as bureaucratic level). Because the MSU campus has a number of faculty both familiar with interdisciplinarity and interested in teaching such classes to undergraduates, and because they understood it as part of the larger Quality Initiatives effort, gathering together a first group to plan a course (which became *The Beautiful and the Good*), was not a problem. MSU's Core Program receives $15,000 in funds to cover some release time for the Coordinator, faculty replacement costs to various Departments, speaker and activity stipends, development stipends for new course development, and some materials acquisitions. In its first year it funded six faculty who collaborated extensively to create an interdisciplinary course entitled *The Beautiful and the Good* which covered the historical and chronological development of aesthetic ideas of what "beauty" and "goodness" consist of in Western culture, as well as Multicultural in its approach to presenting views other than Western concerning "beauty" and "goodness." A similar pattern has been followed in the Civilizations and Migrations class, but with emphasis placed on selected immigration groups and their impact on selected aspects of American society, economics and culture. And our efforts to systematize assessment have proved successful in helping both administrators and faculty to accept the idea of the positive intellectual effects of interdisciplinarity, especially for enhancing critical thinking skills in students.

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*The following projects at MSU have been funded (and would likely not have been possible without Q-7 funds): **(1)** The Core Program: an integrative core curricular program within MSU's Liberal Studies program, and the focus of this presentation **(2)** Freshman Year Experience: a course for first year students to help them make the transition to university life **(3)** Supplemental instruction: a program providing academic help to students in classes that have a high drop/failure rate **(4)** Assessment Project: support for developing the university assessment plan **(5)** Earth Science Position: partial funding of a faculty position in geography that helps the university meet its Liberal Studies Guidelines and the Q-7 indicator for Scientific and Quantitative Literacy **(6)** Mini Grants: funds made available to faculty for small projects related to the Q-7 indicators **(7)** Theme Year: establishes a focus for the institution through guest lectures, arts events, humanities classes etc. **(8)** The UN at fifty conference, and **(9)** SEED Program: Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity: a program in teacher education that addresses equity and diversity.

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Survival Tactics: Problems and Possibilities in (Re)Molding a New FYE Program to "fit in" to our University

Hazel Retzlaff, FYE Co-ordinator

At three FYE Conferences, I had heard program directors speak of the particular difficulties of instituting an FYE program, but not until I took responsibility for implementing such a program did I really understand. After our first less-than-successful run, I think we have learned things which may help others in establishing their programs.

At our 7,000-student university, we have the usual skeptics who remember their own "useless" orientation programs, resent the FYE's their departments will lose if FYE gives credit, and believe students ought not be in college if they can't adapt with "handholding." At the same time, we have administrators and others who expect FYE to provide significant and early help with retention--a serious problem for us. When the consultants Noel-Levitz reported their findings about our institution, the speaker said repeatedly, "But you have started an FYE program to address that problem." Since I had taken the job of co-ordinator that morning--two days before the semester began, I felt overwhelmed by the pressures, both to succeed and to fail as the nay-sayers expected.

A committee of twelve, three faculty and nine Students Services Personnel, planned our course in year-long meetings last year. Now, after the first trial run, it seems unwise to have had most of the course designed by people who don't regularly function in classes with students. When it was time to get course approval from our curriculum board, two of us faculty defended FYE as a "real course," stressing the academic components--the papers, assignments, and critical thinking components.

Our first offering for 250 students filled quickly in summer and I turned down students in the fall. We met twice weekly for a one-credit course, once in large group presentation, once in small group discussion groups of 25 with two facilitators, usually one faculty and one Students Services person. Our large-group presenters worked hard to give dynamic presentations on note-taking, career-planing, drugs and alcohol, and other topics. Though I met several times with each presenter, sometimes the sessions were disappointing and self-serving (such as the film teacher who stressed cinematics rather than "difference" in his diversity presentation, in order to recruit students to film study.) I would caution new program directors about using the large, efficient, but impersonal groups. Fifty of our students dropped after the first large-group presentation by a Sociology prof about "community."

Student evaluations said they would not recommend our course to others. This response was a huge let-down for me and for the twenty facilitators, most of whom had worked diligently to create connections with their small groups. Indeed, students repeatedly said that small groups did create a safe environment for discussion. A few facilitators, who had not attended much training, turned their sections into "bull sessions" in which everyone got A's.

In preparation for offering the course to 500 Freshmen in fall, I am having trouble recruiting Student Services Personnel, since faculty are paid for the credit, but they are not. We face a particular faculty staffing problem as well. Our contract requires 24 semester-hours, but several end with 22 or 23, and many assume they will use FYE to balance. When our Vice-president for Academic Affairs announced that I was recruiting the best teachers for FYE rather than those who needed credits, I contemplated wearing a bullet-proof vest for walking across campus and meeting those teachers whom I had not solicited.

POSSIBILITIES

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The most encouraging features of our experience which might help others are:

1. I have formed an advisory board of six who taught in the first run, from different departments and Student Services. They help choose faculty, texts, syllabus, and scheduling.

2. We listen to our consumers, reading their evaluations carefully and interviewing several about what we can do better. Several have suggested that we make it two credits, have fewer assignments, and more specific responses to

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their writing. Jess, for example, stressed that if we have a session on STD's we need to give them the newest information about drugs and risk groups, since they have heard this before. If FYE does not meet student needs, it fails more completely than other courses, since FYE seeks to solve student problems.

3. Through articles in our college newspaper and staff newspaper, I have clearly invited the campus to take ownership of the program, since if affects all of us. I have urged interested teachers to volunteer, and our roster looks excellent for this fall. I would stress to new directors that one must answer over and over again the objections and questions about such a program, politely and thoroughly.

4. We have capitalized on our strength--the small groups; we will meet in large groups only three or four times in a semester, otherwise twice-weekly in small groups. This puts additional preparation pressure on facilitators, but we will help with that in complete training sessions and lesson plans which offer them plenty of teaching and assignment options.

5. We will eliminate the "loose canons" through mandatory training sessions and memos about mutual expectations. The advisory board has decided to go to "pass-fail" with clear requirements for passing.

6. The most promising possibility is incorporating our program into our specific university--its past and present. Instead of our standard diversity session, for example, we will highlight Project Equality--an effort begun in the 70's to increase the number of our minority students and faculty--an explore community and college reactions. We will strengthen our students' connections with Moorhead State's particular past and character by personalizing as many of the sessions as possible.

7. We will use our university's unique asset of the Regional Science Center, several acres of prairie and river twenty miles from campus. Next fall, a pilot group of sixty will go there for leadership training--a ropes course, among other activities. We will also plan to take as many as possible on a retreat to lake-shore property the University owns for a camping and canoeing experience. This possibility to use our particular resources, to celebrate unique assets and characteristics of MSU, is exciting.

8. We will co-ordinate advising and FYE more closely, arranging wherever possible for the FYE facilitators to become academic advisors for their undeclared advisees, or those who already are majors in their departments.

9. We will work closely with our very able and interested administrators. Two Vice-Presidents and one Dean have volunteered to teach sections of FYE. They also help to find solutions to problems that arise. Their support is invaluable.

10. I will rely more on our student assistant for FYE, a very able senior who can empathize with students better than I, for program suggestions. We also have an Honors Apprentice who can provide such insights. In addition, we will have undergraduate and graduate students serve as co-facilitators in at least five of our twenty sections for next fall.

11. We will retain the large-group sessions in which junior and senior students come to speak of their experiences with off-campus study or with career planning. These were among our most successful lessons.

12. We will explain more fully to our whole campus the three-part mission of FYE: academic success issues, becoming involved in MSU life, and personal choice issues such as alcohol, sexuality and diversity.

13. Through co-operation with Computer Science, we will offer 2 sessions on e-mail and one on internet. Out purpose is to further connect students, especially commuters to MSU, and to increase the technology skills of all FYE students.

14. An interdisciplinary program, The Core, will probably be folded into FYE. This will strengthen the academic focus of FYE, which many faculty have urged.

Experience does keep a dear school, but it teaches very strongly, and just as I learned from several FYE conferences how to gain support on a campus for such a program, I hope our experience can help other new program personnel.

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The Advisors Challenge: Developing Creative Approaches To Retain The Undeclared Student

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ABSTRACT

"Undecided" is a category of students on virtually all University campuses. Students do not major undecided rather, it is an administrative classification that states that an individual is not ready to make a commitment of any particular academic discipline. There are a unique set of problems associated with these students that are important to recognize and appreciate. Norfolk State University recognizes the need to provide services for the undeclared student by creating the Office of Undeclared Students. Advisors within this office are charged with the mission to develop creative approaches to retain undeclared students and promote academic success through special needs programs. Examples of these programs include academic seminars and a Career Exploration program involving professionals within the local community. During this session, emphasis will be on the specific problems associated with the undeclared student along with the programs and special techniques used to retain the undeclared student and promote academic success at Norfolk State University.

An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity University

The PARTNERSHIP FOR SERVICE-LEARNING

Academic Institutions and Service Agencies Uniting Learning and Service

SERVICE-LEARNING: THE FIRST YEAR AND BEYOND

PRESENTERS:

HOWARD A. BERRY, THE PARTNERSHIP FOR SERVICE-LEARNING
LINDA A. CHISHOLM, THE PARTNERSHIP FOR SERVICE-LEARNING
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Service-learning — the union of academic studies with community service — has deservedly achieved widespread visibility and popularity. In the US, the national service initiative has encouraged many colleges and universities to implement service-learning experiences. In the UK, Study-Service has steadily been gaining visibility and popularity. Similar developments are to be found globally.

For those who have long seen and experienced the powerful pedagogical and epistemological implications of service-learning for general and liberal education these developments have been gratifying.

For the first year experience particularly service-learning may hold much potential. Students come to college and university with a variety of expectations and needs. That teaching and learning will be different. That they will be able to be active participants in their own education. That they will be able to encounter and test themselves and their values in the larger community and world in ways that contribute to their emerging maturity, identity and sense of self-worth.

Service-learning, while not a panacea, has the potential to help students and academic institutions realize these age-old expectations and goals of education. To achieve this potential, however, there are some principles basic to successful implementation of service-learning as a coherent and intentional edcuational strategy.

One is that service-learning need not be seen as an internship with the service and the learning framed narrowly and directly. Service-learning opportunities should be available across the curriculum, not limited to one course, discipline or department. Service-learning has value for all students and all disciplines. With faculty imagination many disciplines can be brought to bear on the same service situation.

A second is that the goals of existing and basic disciplines can be achieved through the infusion of service-learning. Faculty can be encouraged to explore new ways of teaching and learning which enhance and enliven traditional studies, and which address issues of critical thinking by allowing students to test classroom theory against the observations they make in their service experience.

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A third is that the service performed should be substantive and meaningful. Service related to a single course can take place only 3-4 hours per week. This is neither substantive nor meaningful service either to the community agency or the student.

If, however, a number of courses have the capacity to recognize the dimensions of learning which can take place from a single service situation, students can take these courses simultaneously, satisfy each by shaping their learning for each discipline, and as a result perform 12-15 hours of service per week. This now provides the agency with a valuable volunteer, and the student with a meaningful experience.

A related result of this pattern is that the students are brought to see disciplines not as fragmented bodies of knowledge but rather as varied, related ways of viewing and interpreting the world and society.

Fourth, there should be a component allowing regular structured and shared reflection on the service experience by students. This reflection should be in addition to the formal learning related to disciplines. Its purpose is to provide for the important and often powerful developmental and values growth which students undergo through community service.

Such an institutional, coherent basis for service-learning provides a crucial possibility to realize the full potential of service-learning for students. Through such a structure students would be able to increase both their academic and service involvement and engagement year by year.

They might, for example, in their first year begin with one or two courses and 4-6 hours of service per week. In the second year this might increase to three or four courses and 6-8 hours of service. By the third year they would be ready for full-time involvement in studies and service, perhaps in the form of an off-campus or international service experience.

This pattern of cascading, increasing involvement in active learning and community service would provide increasing academic skills and enlarged capacity for genuine and substantive service.

Thus the first year, through the experience of service, can become foundational to the intentional coherence of the experience of general education. In it habits of thinking, learning, values and community involvement are formed. If increasing levels of study and service are allowed throughout the college experience, the freshman year can take on new meaning.

Through the thread of service-learning it would become connected to a totality of educational development and growth. Students would find new connections to learning, faculty find new connections to their disciplines, and academic institutions find new connections to community and the world.

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Library skills and Writing projects: synergy in collaboration.

Mila C. Su and Joanne Murley

ABSTRACT

The history of programs for library skills in introductory English classes have used such methods as library workbooks, one-shot presentations, tours and orientations and even team taught classes. After experimenting with some exercises that incorporated library instruction within class assignments, an English faculty member and Reference Librarian decided to establish and implement an integrated program for both introductory and rhetoric and composition courses geared towards first year students. At selected intervals, the librarian would come to the class and demonstrate a class presentation focused on a specific assignment. Immediately after the presentation, the students were provided time and opportunities to directly practice and demonstrate their understanding of the assignment. Since then, several revisions and restructuring of the assignments have been enhanced furthering the skill building techniques.

The program will provide alternative methods of introducing library skills into beginning English rhetoric and composition classes. The presenters will outline their experiences with a series of skill building assignments that have been used during the semester. They will share the successes, restructuring, and responses to these assignments by the faculty and the students. This technique was also shared with other English department members who expressed interest in incorporating some of the exercises in their courses. The results of this endeavor will also be disclosed.

Objectives of the Workshop:

The presentation will not only use lecture, but also demonstrations of some activities used and the library/English skills that are incorporated; a detailed approach to assignments, various teaching strategies; construction of exercises and assignments and research materials used.

Activities

- Five assignments will be discussed and distributed to the participants.
- Hands on exercises for other teaching teams to incorporate into their programs.
- Discuss and describe progressive skill building exercises and teaching strategies

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- Discuss and describe progressive skill building exercises and teaching strategies
- Compare examples of students' work.

Evaluation and Outgrowth:
Many students produced excellent work throughout the semester, including several to whom the instructor recommended further options. These options ranged from suggestions for the students to submit a letter to the Governor, Campus CEO, or submit an article to student newspaper, student literary magazine, or state magazine. To assess the reactions and opinion of the students to the assignments and their work, student feedback was solicited at various times during the semester with many positive comments and suggestions. The final faculty evaluation revealed positive reactions from the students on their interpretation of the faculty member and the structure of the class.

Writing Projects and Library Resources to be demonstrated:

A. Thesaurus: objective is to utilize thesauri in conjunction with dictionaries to upgrade vocabulary and adopt formal tone in essay writing.
Demonstrates: use of materials, verb substitutions, adj/noun replacement and revisions.

B. Memo: Objectives 1) is to extract examples of issues related to employment. 2) Exposure to periodicals available and related to major. 3) Differentiate between jargon and thesaurian words 4) incorporate revision strategies.
Demonstration: periodicals, journals, magazines; terminology and vocabulary.

C. Proposal: Objectives: identify search strategy, extract relevant data from resources, interpret data, analysis of materials.
Discussion of proposals; uses and strategies, identifying and locating resources.

D. Letter to the Editor: Objectives: understand the use of opinion vs fact; developing arguments; distinguish between emotion and fact.
Demonstration and discussion of various resources such as CQ Researcher, Newspapers, and other tools. Review and critique samples of writings.

E. Supportive Essay: Objectives: understand and utilize the online catalog and other electronic resources.
Demonstration and discussion of searching online catalogs, electronic databases, and materials on the Internet.

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Peer Counseling/Peer Teaching First Year Students: Strategies for Active Student Involvement in Learning

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Abstract

Nearly two dozen senior faculty members in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences teach a semester long orientation course for first time students . Nearly 70 percent of the 400 incoming freshmen take the two-credit elective course during their first semester on campus. The course has become a model for other colleges looking for ways to help incoming students to be productive right from the start.

"Ag 150" --12 sections last year-- are taught by teams of two senior faculty and/or administrators in different disciplines. The course is designed to aid students in achieving a smooth transition into their college experience via a variety of active learning experiences known to enhance student persistence and success in college. Students explore the richness and diversity of the university; debate social, personal, and environmental issues confronting agriculture at the local, state , national, and international levels; and develop mentoring relationships with faculty and other students.

Course activities include researching and presenting topics for debate; developing study skills for writing and speaking as they apply to critical issues; exploring the scope of the agricultural sciences and the broad range of career opportunities within agriculture; participating in a variety of clubs, campus activities, and cultural events, and; learning how to live responsibly in a new, university community.

Instruction in the course was significantly enhanced in 1990, when one of the instructors invited a peer educator to class to facilitate a discussion on "relationships--how they change on a college campus". Student response was overwhelmingly supportive and the practice continued to involve peers who have recently experienced the challenges new students struggle with in their transition to college. Peer educators/counselors are now engaged on a regular basis to address many academic and social concerns on the minds of most freshmen, e g. responsible citizenship, safety in the social scene, and drug/alcohol abuse.

The most important objective for the first-year experience is to develop students' motivation and skills for continued learning, critical thinking and application of course material after the course and first-year are over. Peer educators have been effective in getting students meaningfully engaged in learning and focusing attention on active learning to help prepare them as self-directed autonomous learners. In addition, there are numerous other benefits

to the students and the student educators alike. First peer counseling enhances the college socialization process. The peer counselor serves as a role model who sometimes can more effectively instill enthusiasm towards learning that can the University instructor. A second factor is a major benefit for the counselor. Individuals who must teach what they have learned develop an understanding of the materials from two different perspectives, thus cognitive retention is greatly enhanced.

This presentation describes the implementation of one very effective strategy which engages Student Counselors to get first-year students motivated and actively involved cognitively, physically and emotionally in the learning process. The approach has Student Counselors working as peer educators with first year students both in and out of the classroom. Peer educators enrich the undergraduate experience by interacting with students through formal courses, Ag 150, informal workshops at the student center and residence halls, and by providing individualized information, assistance and referrals via a 24 hour telephone hot line. Procedures to recruit, select, and educate peer counselors will be addressed. The presentation offers both planning strategies for administrators and specific classroom techniques for faculty.

One of the oldest educational strategies---people helping and learning from each other---has been rediscovered in recent years and has been incorporated into a wide variety of programs including the freshman year experience at The Pennsylvania State University. Research on student learning clearly indicates the importance of active student involvement. Astin (1992), Chickering et al. (1991), and Norman (1993) state the challenge is to create learning environments focused directly on activities that enhance student learning. Instruction must be structured to maximize essential faculty-student interaction, integrate new technologies fully into the student learning process, and enhance student learning through peer interaction.

McKeechie, et al. (1986) state that the next best answer (after "It depends") to the question "What is the most effective method of teaching? is 'Students teaching other students." There is a wealth of evidence that students teaching other students is extremely effective over a wide range of content, goals, students and personalities." Numerous other studies and our experiences have reached similar conclusions.

Resources

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McKeechie, W. J., Pintrich, P.R. Lin, Y-G, Smith, D.A.F. *Teaching and Learning in the College Classroom: A Review of the Research Literature*, Ann Arbor, MI: National Center for Research to Improve Postsecondary Teaching and learning, University of Michigan, 1986.

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Using Writing Across the Curriculum Techniques in First Year Experience Courses

Michelle Anne Fistek
Robert S. Miller

ABSTRACT

The workshop will begin with a free write and a short history and philosophy of the First Year Experience Course and the Writing Across the Curriculum Program at Plymouth State College where both programs have proven to be quite successful. Writing Across the Curriculum techniques are useful to stimulate discussion, to write to learn and to learn to write. We are dedicated to the idea that it is the responsibility of all instructors to teach writing.(20 minutes)

Presenters will then detail Writing Across the Curriculum techniques and their uses in our Introduction to the Academic Community classes and how other instructors have incorporated these techniques in their classes. Techniques to be discussed include journal writing, free writes, brain storming, listing, and peer reviews among others.(20 minutes)

The last part of the program will be dedicated to demonstrating these techniques with the conference attentendees and answering questions.(35 minutes)

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STUDENT GOVERNANCE AT A SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION: THE NEED FOR A NEW PARADIGM

MAANS KEMP

First-year students who enrol at the Port Elizabeth Technikon (the South African equivalent of a technological or polytechnic university) come from very diverse ethnic, cultural and political backgrounds. Their lives as students are affected in numerous ways by the student government institutions - the Students' Representative Council and the House Committees (in the case of residential students).

Many of the student leaders are elected to these bodies during the second semester of their first year of study. All the students are encouraged to get involved in the election campaigns and to vote for their leaders. The student governance culture on the campus is therefore an important reality for students, including those in their first year of study. Because of the diversity within the South African population and the country's history, different students' ideas and perceptions have been moulded by different paradigms - essentially an apartheid paradigm on the one hand and a struggle paradigm on the other. Neither of these paradigms can meet the needs of a diverse multi-cultural student community in a country pledged to reconciliation and peace. There is a need for the development of a new paradigm as a framework for effective student governance.

...2

During the seminar session the presenter will sketch the background to the current situation and explain how student perceptions and ideas have been influenced by the paradigms of the past. The participants in the session will then be invited to act as (unpaid!) consultants to the Technikon on how to facilitate the development of a new paradigm for student governance in a new South Africa. The resulting inter-active sharing of ideas and experiences by professionals from across the world should be an enriching experience for persons involved or interested in student governance at institutions of higher learning. In conclusion, the presenter will inform the participants of steps which the Technikon has already taken to promote the development of a new student government culture.

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PURDUE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

An Attempt to Improve the Classroom Environment for Beginning Female Students in Science and Engineering

Martha Oakley Chiscon

Purdue University (West Lafayette, Indiana, USA) is in the process of developing a program called the Classroom Climate Workshops (CCW), through a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation entitled *Improving the Climate for Women in the Schools of Engineering and Science*. At Purdue the majority of the students, faculty and graduate assistants in the Schools of Engineering and Science are male, presenting unique difficulties for many female students, starting from their very important initial exposure to Purdue as beginning undergraduates. These difficulties appear to include gender issues in the classroom which could have some relationship to the rate of retention of potential female scientists and engineers, their climate for learning as well as their satisfaction with it, and their perceived or actual success while preparing for the field of their choice. The goals of the CCW are to increase awareness of the complexity of gender issues related to the classroom climate for women, to explore the possible need for attitudinal changes related to gender, and to consider a variety of actions available to achieve these changes. The method used thus far to accomplish these goals has been to invite graduate teaching assistants (TAs) to a workshop, which uses the medium of interactive theater to engage the TAs in a non-threatening setting. Workshops to date have been presented for nearly 300 TAs. Scenarios presented during the workshop were acted out by graduate students from Purdue's Department of Visual and Performing Arts and were based on actual and often initial experiences of female students at Purdue. Data were collected in an attempt to examine the effectiveness of the workshop and a follow-up survey was conducted to determine the effect on the classroom environment. Such workshops, in conjunction with

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freshman orientation courses which also are offered, hopefully will act as a one-two punch in improving the climate for and the persistence of entering female first-year students.

In addition, alternate routes are being attempted at Purdue to deal with the issues above, including early as well as ongoing professional and peer mentoring for women in engineering and science, the development of orientation and career seminars for freshman students, and the development of interactive workshops for faculty.

At Purdue, pre and post-workshop questionnaires indicated that prior to the workshops, female TAs were more aware than their male counterparts of gender issues in the classroom. A substantial number of both male and female TAs indicated that the interactive theater method of presenting difficult issues was highly effective, although a higher percentage of Science TAs highly valued the workshop in comparison to those from Engineering. All TAs recognized the need to treat all students fairly.

All TAs were asked to develop one action step that they felt could be used effectively in the teaching situation in which they themselves were involved. The follow-up survey indicated a strong correlation between the perceived value of the workshop and the positive impact of their action step on the climate in their own classroom. It appears that this workshop did raise awareness to gender issues in the classroom and did create an atmosphere for positive dialogue on how to make the classroom a better learning environment for all students. Key leaders in the development of these workshops included Dr. Emily Wadsworth, Schools of Engineering; Professor Dorothy R. Mennen and Dr. Mary Keehner, School of Liberal Arts; Ms. Barbara Clark, School of Science.

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Presentation Title: *Effective Confrontation Skill Training for Advisors and Faculty*

Co Presenters: *Professors Sandy MacDonald, M.A.*
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I. Philosophy/Goals

This presentation will be of interest to academic advisors, classroom teachers, administrators and support staff who must deal with problematic student behaviours and attitudes which interfere with student success (i.e. absenteeism, poor study habits, excessive socializing, inability to work with others, etc.)

The goal of the presentation is to familiarize participants with a 10-step model which provides clear, easy-to-follow guidelines for effectively confronting problematic issues. The model has been designed to minimize resistance and clarify concerns - thereby facilitating positive changes in student behaviour.

II. Performance Objectives

Upon completion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. identify and describe each step of the confrontation model.
2. apply the model to situations/scenarios drawn from their own past experiences.
3. apply the model to future interactions with students.

III. Topics to be Covered

- Identification of problematic behaviours
- Assessment issues
- Confrontation strategies
- Guidelines

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IV. Learning Activities

		Required Resources
1.0	Introductions and discussion regarding "confrontation" as it applies to the student population	
1.1	Overview of Model	• hand-outs • overheads
2.0	Explain Steps 1 through 10	
2.1	Ask participants to provide examples of problematic behaviours and attitudes	
2.2	Have participants choose one or two scenarios to proceed with through the model.	
2.3	Have participants discuss other possible applications.	
3.0	Explain Checklist	

V. Evaluation Procedure

This presentation will be considered successful if:

1. participants are able to generate several situations and scenarios to which the confrontation model can be applied, as evidenced by participant feedback.
2. participants are able to verbalize their understanding of the model, as evidenced by discussions at each successive step.
3. participants are able to apply the model to their chosen scenarios, as evidenced by the strategies and responses they generate at each successive step.
4. participant feedback is positive.

VI. Strategies to Motivate and Reinforce Participants

1. Research suggests that learners are motivated when their own experienced knowledge is drawn upon in the learning process (Hunt 1992). This presentation has been designed so that participants can find personal relevance and meaning in the application of the model to their own chosen examples.
2. Learning will be reinforced by giving each participant a copy of the model to examine at their leisure and apply in their own work with students.

David Turnbull

Project Proposal to the Ninth International Conference on The First-Year Experience

What are the Characteristics of an Effective College Teacher?

What can college teachers do to maximize the learning potential of college students?

How can teachers assist "ethnic" students in making successful adjustments to higher education?

What influences students' achievements during the first year of college?

What is the role of today's college teacher?

How can we ensure we are using the most effective instruction strategies?

To answer these questions, Seneca College teacher David Turnbull surveyed and interviewed students to find out what **they** considered to be the characteristics of effective college teachers.

When David became a teacher six years ago, he knew he had the expertise in his field to offer the students, but wasn't sure what was expected of him as a teacher. "How can I ensure their success in their first year of college?", What do they want me to do to help them learn?", and "How can I help them adjust to this bold new experience of college?" were many of the questions going through his mind.

As his Masters Degree in Education thesis, David used qualitative and quantitative research to ask students in one of the most diverse student populations in Canada what they considered effective.

"You need the information from their answers before you can answer <u>your</u> questions", insists David. "And <u>then</u> you can develop your personal strategies for teaching success for the first year student."

- *At the time of writing (February, 1996) the research is just wrapping up. The results that have emerged are most interesting.*

- *The format of the presentation would be a five-minute introduction, 20 minutes of group work, a 30-minute presentation based on my research, and 20 minutes of discussion and criticism.*

- *Seneca College is Canada's largest college with some 14,000 full-time students, and 100 programs. It also has one of the most diverse student populations in Canada, with more than 60 cultural groups represented.*

- *David Turnbull, 44, is a former broadcast journalist, and is an accomplished presenter. He holds a Bachelor of Applied Arts degree from Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto, and a post-graduate Associateship from The University of London Institute of Education in England. He expects to receive his MEd from Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario this year.*

David Turnbull/Seneca College/North York, Ontario, Canada/1996-02-24

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Procedures and Outcomes for Students
Christopher Pratt, Ed.D. - prattch@lanmail.shu.edu

This session will present research findings, implications and benefits of integrating first year student programs with work-based experiential learning programs. Participants will be provided with specific considerations relating to both program design and program review.

The study investigated the relationship between procedures and outcomes as perceived by participating students in cooperative education work-based experiential learning programs to determine if there is a relationship between a particular set of procedures and a particular set of outcomes. A sample of 215 Arts & Sciences and Business co-op students from four institutions rated the importance of procedures and outcomes they experienced. A high positive correlation ($\underline{r}$ = .68) between the combination of procedures and outcomes to the canonical variate, made this dimension worth interpreting. Although procedures vary among institutions, what's important to students across institutions is doing co-op, the experience itself. Students seek the co-op work-based learning experience to make academic work become more meaningful ($\underline{r}$ = .74), learn to work with others ($\underline{r}$ = .68) and gain more realistic career expectations ($\underline{r}$ = .64); generally to help make sense out of college and to give direction to their lives. Most program procedures, especially those that are academic requirements, are unimportant in relation to the outcomes sought by students. The decision by students to participate in co-op is driven by a desire for the outcomes that they seek to experience. The procedures that facilitate those outcomes, are important, others are not. This relationship has been named "a search for meaning and connectedness", because it is not the specific academically related steps that are important to the students, but rather the co-op program as a vehicle to get at the outcomes which are desired by the students.

Implications of these findings are that in designing and reviewing both first year experience programs and work-based experiential learning for students, procedures that are important to students are those procedures that relate to program outcomes which are sought by students who choose to participate, not neccessarily those that are important to faculty and administrators.

Implications of this research are that the decision by students to participate is driven by a desire for the outcomes that

they seek to experience. These implications are true, of course, for both first year programs and for work-based experiential learning programs. Specifically, institutions operating or considering integrating first year student programs with work-based experiential learning would be advised to consider closely the need for extensive academic program requirements. Program procedures requiring intensive faculty regulation seem far less important to participating students than they are to the institutions. Clearly, the outcomes of co-op participation which many value and most programs seek are experienced by students, but they appear not related to the academic requirements.

In terms of meaning, co-op work-based learning experiences provide students with valuable opportunities for exploration and clarification of their career goals and acquisition of skills and experience related to those goals (Cohen, 1978; Perry, 1981; Pitcof & Brodsky, 1965). Students participating in cooperative education work-based experiential learning perceived that both their educational and career goals were clarified as a consequence of their work experience (Wilson & Lyons, 1961). Further, "It is clear that students opt for co-op because they perceive that it will provide them with skills and information and insights essential to their futures" (Wilson, 1987). These "insights essential" to student's futures are the meaning, the search for which is so common to us all.

In terms of connectedness, numerous studies (Brightman, 1973; Brown, 1976; Cohen, 1978; Cornelius, 1978; Mosbacker, 1957; Mueller, 1992; Peart, 1974; Smith, 1944; Wilson, 1974; Wilson & Lyons, 1961) have shown cooperative education contributed to student's personal growth and development of social skills. Specifically, co-op experiences helped students develop a greater understanding of interpersonal relationships in a work environment (Keith, 1974). In school, one progresses through a repetitive sequence, a consistent and understood pattern from grade to grade. However, with one's work career that pattern changes. College is the conduit through which the journey is made into a new and quite different realm of acceptance based on selection of work which is meaningful, and in which one can realistically make a valuable contribution. This contribution most often requires one to work responsibly and maturely with others utilizing appropriate communication skills to analyze and solve problems.

These are precisely the outcomes provided by cooperative education work-based learning and experienced by students. Cooperative education work-based experiential learning provides a window through which students can view the new group setting that they are to move into after college. Importantly, it allows them this view, while they are still in the developmental activities of school and family preparing for the transition, while there is still time to modify plans and behavior.

Procedures should be utilized that most directly and simply get at gaining insights and relationships, in order to allow students to understand more clearly and navigate more comfortably the transitions ahead of them.

Further implications relate to program administration, staffing and costs; marketing, recruitment and retention; program size and evaluation, expectations for growth and the need for various procedures; funding requirements and guidelines; and various state and national plans, especially those relating to workforce development.

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COLLEGE

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STUDENT ADJUSTMENTS AND BEHAVIORS: AN EMPIRICAL LOOK AT THE FRESHMAN EXPERIENCE

Howard Seiler, Ph.D
V.J. Brown, Ph.D
Douglas Horner, Ph.D.

This program consists of three integrated presentations: "A Freshman Orientation Program: Genesis, Continuation, and Progress", "Assessing Freshman Behavior: A Comprehensive Empirical Model", and "The Effects of Parental Education Upon the Academic Achievement of Freshman."

The first presentation will discuss the beginning efforts in constructing a freshman orientation course. Approximately six years ago we started thinking in terms of a freshman orientation course in respect to the college's retention rate. After attending a FYE workshop and reading the literature it was decided to put together a freshman course on an experimental basis. Included was the design for a longitudinal study so we would follow the progress of the students and the effects this course would have on retention. The course and curriculum was designed for five sections with 20 students in a section. The faculty selection was based on interest in teaching such a course across disciplines. The purpose of the course is designed to teach basic survival skills to entering freshman; to acclimate freshman to personal, academic, career, social, and recreational opportunities at Shepherd College; to develop lifelong learning skills in students; and to help students learn to cope successfully with the demands of the first year of college through the use of challenges and opportunities in and out of the classroom.

The second presentation centers upon an empirical evaluation of the Freshman Colloquium Program comparing students completing the program to the rest of the Freshman class. This study utilized six behavioral areas containing 108 specific dependent variables: (1) Knowledge of college services and activities [college variables]; (2) race/ethnicity; (3) age [traditional/non-traditional]; (4) commuter/resident; (5) home state; (6) religious preference; (7) high school grade point average; (8-12) five dimensions of ACT or SAT tests; (13) major/minor; (14) full-time/part-time; (15) on/off campus residence; (16) military status; (17) athletic participation; (18) job status; (19) participation on the Living Learning Center (a dormitory setting for social and academic activities; (20) father's education; (21) mother's education; (22) sibling's education; and (23) participation in Freshman Colloquium Class.

After a pilot study was conducted in fall, 1991 all measuring instruments concerning the dependent variables were developed, pretested, checked for reliability and validity, and revised. Statistical procedures utilized to analyze the data were: chi-square, analysis of variance, t-tests, discriminate analysis, and multiple regressions. In this presentation, important findings will be discussed concerning the analysis of the data.

The final presentation concerns the effect of parental educational levels upon the academic

achievement of freshman. In two landmark national studies conducted by Blau and Duncan (1967) and Featherman and Hauser (1978) concerning social mobility, various ascribed and achieved factors relevant to education was investigated. Both studies and several follow-up studies have strongly suggested "...that family background influences school achievement at every stage of the educational process." One of the factors consistent within all these studies indicated that the father's educational level significantly affected their son's educational attainment level (Beeghly, 1989).

From the aforementioned suggestion, each freshman student in our study responded to five categories concerning their parent's education; no high school diploma, high school diploma only, some college, college graduate, or advanced college degree. From this information an analysis was developed concerning the father's educational attainment level and its affect upon both sons' and daughters' high school GPA's, ACT/SAT scores, and college GPA as freshman. The same analytic procedure was utilized concerning the mother's educational attainment level. Analysis of statistics comparing these four groupings will be presented. The results were very enlightening.

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SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Teaching Study Strategies in Higher Education: Embedding effective study strategy instruction in a University 101 course and examining its effectiveness.

Allyson F. Hadwin

This program contains two parts. It begins with the presentation of a review paper on study strategy instruction in higher education. Building on the two main recommendations emerging from this review, part 2 of the program interactively engages participants in a number of activities designed to promote and assess strategic learning in a University 101 course. The session concludes with the presentation of a program evaluation designed to serve two purposes: (a) evaluate the success of study strategy instruction and University 101 programs; and (b) assess individual student progress. This program makes a significant contribution to theory and practice in study strategy instruction because: (a) it is grounded in theories of self-regulated, lifelong learning; and (b) it provides a framework for the design, development and integration of program evaluation as a concurrent and integral part of program development.

Part 1: The paper presented in the first part of this program applies best-evidence selection procedures to collect and review recent empirical studies investigating the effects of teaching post-secondary learners about study tactics and strategies. To optimize relevance to authentic learning situations, all the studies selected for review allowed students choice about whether to use new study methods in everyday courses. We address four questions: Which study tactics were effective? How were tactics taught? In what context did interventions succeed? And, toward what short-term (or local) goals were study tactics directed?

Our review documents that there is a *very* scant research base upon which to ground recommendations for study tactics that populate the many handbooks available or to justify mounting costly programs that promise to improve students' study skills. In today's resource-limited world, this is unsound fiscal management. Having explicitly noted our reservations, we cautiously conclude that concept mapping, self-questioning, and monitoring one's time spent studying seem to have modest positive effects on students' achievement in courses. We speculate this is because each of these study tactics aims to meet one or a few local goals during studying sessions. What has not yet been investigated is how students identify their own local goals during study sessions and how capably they can select from among multiple study tactics to approach local goal(s) they identify. It has also not yet been researched whether students adapt study tactics to differing circumstances that they are likely to encounter amongst the range of courses they take. These are important targets for future research.

The paper concludes with two recommendations. First, we urge that study skills programs, however they may be situated in students' curricula, strive to embed research and evaluation into their efforts.This could make a significant contribution to our understanding of the effects such courses have and the effectiveness of study skills education in general.

Second, we suggest blending students' work in their regular courses with instruction about study strategies. To learn and hone study tactics and to develop genuinely adaptive strategies, students must work with some academic content. We hypothesize that using academic content drawn from the courses in which students are enrolled will have more benefit and relevance than separating study methods instruction from a student's current course load. Four reasons underlie this suggestion. First, we hypothesize that students will ascribe greater value to study tactics and strategies that they experience as contributing to grades in their credit-bearing courses. Second, as students acquire and practice analogous study tactics across different content and contexts characteristic of several courses, "natural" variance in context invites them to engage in mindful abstraction that underlies transfer. Third, students will be genuinely involved in all three elements of productive self-regulation—framing goals, considering techniques, and strategically selecting and adapting tactics—as they approach studying in an authentic context. Fourth, feedback about the effects of their study methods—from peers, their text, teaching assistants, and lectures—will likely be more frequent and meaningful when study methods are used within the context of day-to-day work in their courses.

Part 2: Participants will engage in a number of interactive activities that demonstrate the ways in which the above recommendations have been addressed in the design, development and evaluation of a University 101 course at Simon Fraser University (Canada). University 101 is a 13-week, 3-credit, Pass/Fail course offered to undergraduate students who have just been admitted to university from high school. The goal for the course is to maintain a recurring theme across all course topics: through participation in the course, students will learn to take control of their learning experience and processes, thereby becoming more independent, self-directed university students. The five goals for the course range from exposure to a general philosophy of higher education, to developing a personal philosophy, setting personal goals, and acting upon those goals in a strategic manner.

As designers of this course, our goals were: (a) to embed the development of an evaluation in the development of the course; and (b) to embed the evaluation itself in the course curriculum. In other words, we have discussed the design, development, and integration of program evaluation as a concurrent and integral part of the program development. This approach to evaluation design has been very effective because the program informed the evaluation and, reciprocally, the discussion about the evaluation informed the design of the program. Extensive program evaluations have not historically been conducted in the context of "Transition to University Courses" or "Learning and Study Skills Courses". For that reason, we believe that the approach of designing and developing program evaluation as an integral part of program development may serve as a model future program design in higher education.

This session will be structured to provide participants with the opportunity to participate in the strategic learning activities we have embedded in University 101. These collaborative activities will demonstrate the ways in which: (a) instructors in higher education can promote strategic learning rather than teaching basic study skills; and (b) student assessment and program evaluation can be embedded in these activities. Specifically, participants will learn about the use of paired-structured interviews, student reflections, and focus groups as a means for promoting productive self-regulation toward lifelong learning.

Academic Services

SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY

FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS SPEAK OUT: WHAT INFLUENCES SUCCESS?

Dr. Robert J. Watson, Dean of Academic Services

Goal: To focus on issues that students believe influence their academic success in the first year at university.

Methods of Presentation: The participants will begin the session by taking the same survey administered to first-year students. Half of the participants will assume the role of students who have earned well-above-average grades and respond to the survey accordingly. The other half of the participants will assume the role of the students who have earned well-below-average grades, etc. A brief tabulation of the participants' results will be done and serve as a taking-off point for the short presentation and lively discussion of the real first-year student data. Participants will have access to numerous first-year materials developed and used by Slippery Rock University.

Content: Over the last few decades, faculty and administrators have given considerable attention to first-year students and the curricula and programs with which they are involved. The desire to know what influences success and what doesn't has been a major focus. Students have been tracked focusing on issues such as age, gender, ethnicity, class attendance, preparation, performance, extra-curricular involvement, library usage and numerous others. Faculty and staff have been surveyed regarding their opinions of what makes a difference in first-year programs. The result is an immense amount of data, all of which is important depending upon the issues and the institution.

However, a contention is that one important link in this research may have been somewhat overlooked--the student. How often have we as first-year educators gone directly to the student for answers to what really matters in the important transition to higher education? It was upon this premise that the research question was based. The goal of the research was to identify the factors first-year students believe influence their academic success.

Beginning the conclusion of the fall, 1993 semester all first-year students earning either a minimum of B average (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) or below C average (2.0) were surveyed. Responses were tabulated and reviewed. The procedure has been repeated each semester using the semester grade point average. Each semester, the data have been tabulated and reviewed. The information gathered has been shared with the Office of Orientation and Retention to permit programming in the university's June orientation sessions.

Is there a difference in what faculty and staff believe influences first-year student success and what first-year students believe influences their success?

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Smith

Office of the Class Deans

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Will Smith College Ever Have First-Year Seminars?

Tom Riddell, Dean of the First-Year Class

Will Smith College Ever Have First-Year Seminars?

Smith College has an "open curriculum," which, in fact, is one significant factor in the decision of many students to matriculate. Beyond the requirements of a major, Smith students do not have any general education requirements or core curriculum. This has been the case since the late 1960s-early 1970s when an existing set of distribution requirements was eliminated. To compensate for this, the faculty substituted a hortatory statement in the College catalogue identifying the components of a broad, liberal arts education and put its faith in the powers of persuasion of faculty advisers. Seven "fields of knowledge" were defined; and students were encouraged, through exhortation and faculty advice, to take at least one course in each field.

Ever since then, the faculty has considered any number of proposals to strengthen the "expectation" that students will distribute their courses across the curriculum and to ensure that Smith students are broadly, liberally and well- educated. Faculty opinion, and some evidence, suggests that there are areas of the curriculum that are avoided by some students (e.g., math, lab science, and writing courses). The efforts to "restore discipline" have ranged from new sets of distribution requirements to proposals for "first-year seminars." Recently, the faculty adopted a set of Latin Honors requirements, which are received by about 25% of graduating seniors each year. To be eligible for Latin Honors (note, this is not a graduation requirement for all students), students must have taken at least one course in each of the seven fields of knowledge during their undergraduate work. This will become fully effective with the graduation of the class of 1998, when it will be possible to assess how effective it has been in influencing the distribution choices of all graduating students.

In the mid-1980s, the faculty's Committee on Academic Policy presented a proposal for "freshmen" seminars. It was defeated, however -- as had all other attempts to impose curricular requirements at Smith since 1970. Since this defeat for a program designed to smooth the transition to college and to develop college-level skills, there have been frequent calls for enhancing the academic orientation of entering Smith students. In late February 1996, after a year-long effort by the Dean of the Faculty and the Committee on Academic Policy, the faculty adopted a writing requirement for all first-year students; every student must take one writing intensive course during her first-year. At the moment, the Committee

is also exploring a new proposal for first-year seminars. In this presentation, I will explore:

1) the content of the earlier seminar proposal and why it was not accepted;

2) what has led to the current interest in first-year seminars and review the Committee's research on programs at similar institutions;

3) what this proposal is likely to look like; and

4) what the prospects are that it will be instituted.

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Geneseo

Office of the Dean of the College

The Ends Mystify The Means
The Joys and Sorrows of Post-Pilot Mission Refinement of a Freshman Seminar Program

Thomas A. Greenfield
Dean of the College and Chair, First Semester Seminar Committee

In their widely circulated "Twenty Steps to a Successful Freshman Seminar," Upcraft and Gardener identify refinement of the seminar after studying the results of a pilot project as a discrete step in the final stages of bringing a freshman seminar program into being. While the word "refine" may invite the inference that this stage is characterized by relatively minor adjustments and academic tinkering, post-pilot results may, in fact, engender a major re-thinking of the purpose, breadth, potential and limitations of the entire seminar program -- even if the pilot project is relatively successful. Such has been the case at Geneseo from 1994-1996, when a pilot freshman seminar project proved to be so successful on so many fronts that we re-cast the mission of the program -- with decidedly mixed results.

Geneseo first introduced its pilot freshman seminar as a means of giving first-semester students a"small college" academic experience. Although Geneseo (undergraduate population 5000) presents itself as a small liberal arts college, its 20:1 (and climbing) student/faculty ratio has taken its toll on introductory classes whose enrollment size and pervasiveness throughout the curriculum leave many freshmen with a "university" rather than a "college" schedule.

The results of a small pilot project of four academic, content based one credit seminars showed that, in fact, the seminars had succeeded in providing first semester students with a positive, intimate "small college" learning environment that was atypical of the other academic experiences they were having during their first semester. But in interviews students also reported high levels of satisfaction with other aspects of the seminar, some of which the College had not anticipated or emphasized in mounting the pilot project. Among these were (predictably) the opportunity to write and speak in an unusually protective environment as well as (not so predictably in our case) the opportunity to "go off the subject" and discuss college adjustment issues ranging from registration anxiety to fraternity/sorority politics. To the surprise of the planners, "pilot faculty," including ten and twenty-year veterans of the college faculty, reported that the seminar had created new opportunities for pedagogical experimentation and innovative interaction with students.

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Buoyed by these results we revamped the second year of the pilot project to encourage faculty to experiment with pedagogy and enlarge the student life aspect of the seminars. We also encouraged faculty to explore more actively the "friendly format" for writing papers. Furthermore, we enlarged the offerings from four to eleven sections.

Results from the second-year surveys were as surprising as the first year surveys but for altogether different reasons. The expanded scope of the seminar led to student complaints of "too much work for one credit," which we took to be largely valid. Some second-year faculty complained that, what the first-year teachers saw as opportunities to innovate, were for them constraints and encumbrances. Nevertheless, the student level of satisfaction with the "small college" experience and the opportunity to get to know a professor on a very close, informal basis remained extremely high, eventhough both students and faculty had complained about issues that the planning committee believed to have been resolved.

Conclusions. The post-pilot refinement step can be a surprisingly difficult and complex stage in the development of a freshman seminar program. It may, in fact, contain more stages in and of itself or prove to be more difficult that the initial implementation. Developers of new seminars should plan for that possibility. Furthermore, short term pilot project assessment may not help institutions distinguish between what strengths and weaknesses re more or less inherent in the structure of the seminar and what strengths and weakness are tied principally to the individuality of participating faculty. Freshman seminar programs need to make certain that their long term assessment procedures and studies address this question.

Office of the President

SWT

Student as Outsider: Creating Identity, Recreating Family, and Challenging the Patriarchy

Program Chair: Dr. Rebecca Bell-Metereau
Presenters: Dr. Gene Bourgeois
Dr. Timothy Hulsey

The proposed session will look at how three faculty members at Southwest Texas S. U. participate in a university-wide effort to improve retention of first-year students. First-year seminar faculty member and Assistant Professor of Psychology, Dr. Tim Hulsey, will discuss how he integrates terms and concepts from psychology into his interdisciplinary first-year seminar course. Identity formation is a central process that students simultaneously study and internalize as they transform themselves from outsiders to insiders in the academic community.

Coordinator of the Residential College and Associate Professor of History, Dr. Gene Bourgeois, describes the success of the newly formed residential college, modeled on the residential college systems found in Oxford and University of Kent in Britain, at such private American institutions as Goddard and Evergreen College, and such prestigious public U. S. institutions as The Miami University Western College in Oxford, Ohio. With such features as block enrollment, classrooms in the residence hall, and live-in faculty, the Residential College at Southwest Texas has created a significant improvement in student satisfaction and retention by recreating the family structure. This is of particular importance to first-generation college students who have traditionally relied on a strong social and familial support system to bolster their sense of identity.

Special Assistant to the President and Professor of English, Dr. Rebecca Bell-Metereau will give an overview of where these examples fit into a larger pattern coordinated by the university-wide Quality First-Year Experience Team. The team includes the president of the university, the assistant to the president, an associate vice president for student affairs,

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two students, an associate dean, the director of residence life, the coordinator of the residential college, and a counselor from the university-wide quality team, who acts as a facilitator. This group works to coordinate the efforts of faculty whose courses are deliberately designed to welcome women, minorities, differently abled, and non-traditional students into the traditional university setting. All participants are encouraged to "challenge the patriarchy," or whatever other dominant structure prevents them from fully participating in the educational process.

Some of the faculty, administrative, and student projects include applying psychological, developmental, and "learning styles" concepts to teaching methodologies. Others involve using media such as video to involve students more experientially in traditional subject areas. Dr. Bell-Metereau describes how her work as a facilitator for the national ISM project (involving twelve schools from across the country) puts video cameras in students' hands so that they can create video works dealing with issues of racism, sexism, idealism, nationalism, elitism, etc., at the same time that they take a class in ethnic studies and read traditional texts on these subjects. Samples of these students' work are scheduled to appear on a nationally broadcast program produced by the Public Broadcasting system.

The primary goal of the multi-level first-year team is to encourage collaboration within the university and with outside communities and other universities to improve student learning, performance, and retention and achieve the following objectives: 1) Coordinate a number of programs designed to connect different subjects and increase the contact between students and faculty; 2) Increase access to higher education and a "private college" atmosphere for educationally or financially disadvantaged students through contact with university faculty, diverse students, and challenging subject matter; 3) Implement these goals through a living, learning, and social structure that encourages equality and empowerment, creates a sense of family among strangers, and allows the student who has been an "outsider" to become a fully participating member of the academic community.

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ST. LAWRENCE
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"Dissolving Divisions; The Pitfalls and Possibilities of Collaboration in a First-Year Program"

Grant Cornwell
Associate Dean of the First Year
Associate Professor of Philosophy

The First-Year Program is approaching its tenth anniversary at St. Lawrence. The FYP is a collaborative initiative between faculty and student development professionals. This session will review some of the turbulent history of this collaboration, and, through a critical examination of case studies, it will offer examples of how both faculty and student development professionals have changed their views of their work as a result of working together.

The centerpiece of the FYP is its academic curriculum. Every first-year student enrolls in an FYP College, built around a two-semester, team-taught, multidisciplinary course which examines certain general, enduring and fundamental issues in liberal learning. Woven into the fabric of the course in the Communication Skills Component, the premise of which is that reading, writing, speaking and research are complex intellectual and social activities that are at the heart of liberal education. FYP Colleges meet twice a week for team-taught lectures and twice a week in seminars. Students' seminar instructors are also their academic advisors. What this means is that FYP faculty advise students whom they see four times a week, in large classes and small. The quality and quantity of contact between faculty and students in the FYP makes possible the kind of close, personal relationships necessary for the giving and receiving of meaningful advice. Faculty can help students chart their academic plans, knowing their strengths and weaknesses, their hopes and interests. The role of the advisor is not simply to inform the students of their academic requirements, but to work with them to envision and project academic plans particular to each individual student.

Since the major goal of the FYP is to promote the integration of academic and social experience, members of each FYP College live together. FYP Colleges, when successful, develop into communities of learners which value intellectual collaboration and critical reflection. Conversations begun in the classroom on theories, ideas, beliefs, and values are continued in the residence halls, examined, evaluated, measured against students' experience, and picked up again when class reconvenes. In these Colleges collaboration and cooperation on readings, papers, and projects help students discover one another as co-learners, as different persons with different strengths and interests who have come to this institution to engage in a common project. Thus, the goal of living and learning together is to help students understand how critical intellectual inquiry can directly inform their experience, both subjectively, in their individual reflection on their identity, beliefs, and values, and socially, in the choices they make in how they live together.

Achieving these goals calls for sustained collaboration between faculty and student development professionals in planning the curriculum and co-curriculum for each FYP College, and in implementing those plans, day in, day out, over the course of the year. This session will explore the dynamics of that collaboration, and suggest how both faculty and student development professionals have been transformed in the process.

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"The Transformation from ME to WE: Strategies for Fostering Community in the First Year Experience"

Kenneth V. Hardy, Michelle Jensen-Summers, Roxanne Hill, Tracey Laszloffy

In society, and in academia, a high premium is placed on individual accomplishment, competition over collaboration, and autonomy over reliance on others. Consequently, it is often difficult to convince students that collaboration and the participation in community are worthwhile initiatives. It is difficult for many students, especially those in their first year, to find comfort in slogans such as "the collective is greater than the sum of its parts", when the reward system throughout the College/University culture is based on individual achievement. However, learning how to establish, maintain, and participate in community is integral to effectively negotiating the myriad of developmental and functional tasks associated with the first year experience.

For many students entering college for the first time, this milestone also coincides with leaving home/family for the first time. Thus, it is common for many first year students to experience overwhelming difficulty in their attempts to adjust to college. Conflicts with roommates, exposure to students from different religions, ethnic groups and regions, alienation, loneliness, and depression are common experiences that complicate students' mastery of the first year experience. Unfortunately, many students----particularly first year students----have yet to develop the skills necessary for creating and participating in community.

If students are to effectively negotiate the first year experience, learning how to participate in community is essential. This workshop, based on the first year experience course at Syracuse University in the United States, will outline strategies for assisting students' with making the essential ideological shift from a focus on "me" to an emphasis on "we." Participants learn how loneliness, alienation, and cultural conflicts can be addressed effectively through the creation of community. Special attention will be devoted to the importance of promoting group cohesion and cooperation, as well as strategies for fostering an appreciation for diversity without compromising the integrity of the community. Audiovisuals will be utilized and handouts will be available.

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"Politics, Pragmatics, and Pedagogy: The Challenges of Diversity in the First Year Experience"

Kenneth V. Hardy, Tracey A. Laszloffy, Roxanne L. Hill, Michelle Jensen-Summers

Colleges and universities often are the ground upon which students from a range of diverse backgrounds come together, perhaps for the first time for many of them. In this environment students have sustained opportunities to meet, interact with, and ultimately, learn to respect and live with, or to distrust and distance from those who are different from themselves.

How students deal with diversity during their first year at college establishes a foundation for how they will respond to these issues in the years to come.....as college students, and as members of society. Therefore, whether political, economic, religious, racial, or ethnic, (to name a few), it is critical that students begin confronting and learning how to negotiate issues of diversity in the first-year. Unfortunately, because of the politics of difference, many educators struggle to find effective ways of helping students learn to negotiate differences.

This workshop will discuss several challenges inherent in the politics and pragmatics associated with learning to negotiate issues of diversity; such as:

"how broadly or narrowly should diversity be defined?"
"should issues of diversity be addressed as a single or integrated part of the curriculum?"
"how does the issue of power complicate discussions of diversity?"
"how can diversity be discussed without it leading to unmanageable conflict and hostility?"
"how can educators promote harmony among diverse groups without fostering homogeneity?"

In addition to discussing the challenges associated with issues of diversity, specific pedagogical strategies for addressing these challenges will be provided. In this way, participants will learn ways of negotiating the politics and pragmatics of diversity during the first year experience.

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U·A·L·R
DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH COMMUNICATION

Integrating the Cognitive and the Affective in the First Year Course: Using Games to Promote Active Learning

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Our session will focus on using games and experiential activities to enhance learning. While having a potpourri of games can be effective, this session focuses on depth rather than breadth. Thus, we will explore one game thoroughly in order to examine its relationship to pedagogy and learning. We will suggest that using a carefully designed game at a pivotal point in a course can induce active and experiential learning, particpation and collaboration. In a sense, the game becomes the teacher.

Moreover, in an era when universities are being asked to address retention issues, strategies that promote active learning, such as the game(s) we will examine, might serve not only to improve education, but also to attract students to education and to keep them involved.

Participants in this session will playa game we use with out students, "Win As Much As you Can." We then they will work in groups to discuss how the game works as a teaching strategy. Specifically, we will consider the game's ability to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To enhance trust and demonstrate what the lack of it does to a community.
2. To define community as our learning community and to begin building that community.
3. To develop the notion of partnership, i.e., working together to achieve a common goal or resolve a shared problem.
4. To promote an inter-subjective and dialogic discourse, in which people are treated as subjects, not objects.
5. To induce active participation which in turn heightens learning and satisfaction with the process.
6. To develop a commitment to learning.
7. To recognize various social options available in collaborative learning.
8. To understand the various ways we respond in a conflict: competing, compromising, accomodating, avoiding, and collaborating.
9. To discuss the games relationship to our community through systems theory and rhetorical theory.

Following the small-group discussion, we will share student journal responses to the game and explain how its instroduction encourages students to invent and introduce games of their own. We will examine one such game, a version of "Simon Says," that students developed to enact and explicate the binary logic of oppression that Paulo Freire critiques in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

If time permits, we will conclude by introducing other games and by asking participants to join us in discussing other ways games might be used to promote active learning.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
CENTRAL ARKANSAS

CONWAY, ARKANSAS 72035-0001

Critical Conditions for Freshman Success: Connections, Confluence and Cognition

Presenters: Barbara Holmes, Department Chair, Administration and Secondary Education

Ralph Calhoun, Assistant Professor

LLoyd Hervey, Assistant Professor

ABSTRACT

The University of Central Arkansas operates a unique freshman success program for minority students to facilitate their transition into the first year college. This session will present the critical factors which account for the high academic success of the student participants. Program experience has shown that when the critical conditions for success has been created, students perform at higher levels. These conditions include (1) creating a climate of high expectations (2) creating a community of learners (3) structuring a study discipline which reinforces cognition, community and competence and (4) celebrating student success.

This session will delineate the significant factors which integrate to form this innovative program. These factors include: parental involvement and support, role models and peer turors, university-wide commitment to the program, high bias for activity and participant involvement, diversity in staffing, cultural activities, leadership training and technology skill building. Also at the center of program activities is weekly training in mastering library utilization.

Also discussed will be the mistakes and successes of building the program. Experience has shown that the programming needs of special student populations, such as African-American students are different and it is very important to address certain issues to avoid program failures.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
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Up Close and Personal: Student Reflection on Academic Success Strategies that Work (and those that don't)

Presenters: Barbara Holmes, Chair Department of Administration and
Secondary Education and Director Summer Academy for Freshman Students

The University of Central Arkansas operates a very successful program for recruiting and retaining freshman students. An essential component of the program's success is the role that the student reflection plays in shaping and refining program goals, activities and outcomes.Over the past two years students have identified the specific attributes of the program which helps them to achieve academic, personal and social success in the freshman year. Specific topics will include (1) syncronization of mission and values (2)cultural dissonance (3) building community (4) recognition, rituals and traditions and (5) celebrating the successes.This session will discuss the common mistakes institutions and students make in the freshman year. Finally, a framework of suggestions and recommendations for making the freshman year a more effective and satisfying experience for the student and the institution will be presented.

Smoothing the Path: Strategies for [illegible]en Access First-Year Experience

Leslie Williams
Janet L. Reed

The University College of the University of Cincinnati serves an at-risk population: recent high school graduates who did not complete a pre-college program, students who are often the first in their families to attend college, adult students returning to college or just beginning their academic work. Our students are often those whose grade point averages are low, or whose reading skills are not yet at college level, or whose "cultural capital" is that of the urban underclass. These students, while often ambitious and highly motivated, may need developmental classes in writing, reading, and math as well as study skills and an overall orientation to academic expectations and behaviors. To recruit and then to retain these students is a challenge to the university's commitment to social justice in our community. Any impediment, whether to registration, orientation, or learning, can put the student at further risk. The experience of higher education, especially in the freshman year, must, therefore, be made more inviting, more welcoming, without being any less demanding.

Active recruitment of students is the first segment of a positive First-Year Experience. Faculty involvement in school presentations or at in-house telethons provides a personal contact and shows students that the college is interested in them on an individual level. Soliciting student enrollment is a practical reminder that we as faculty are in a competitive marketplace, that our students are essentially consumers choosing among a number of options and that we, as faculty, are one of the most important marketing tools of the university. Using faculty to make a personal, pre-enrollment contact with the student as he or she decides which college to attend has been a means of reaching into the community with authentic voices from the campus.

Equally effective has been our "One Stop Registration" which allows the student to apply for admission and register for university classes, fee-free, at one location. With the use of a modem, the entire admission and registration process can now take place at any selected site such as the student's neighborhood church basement or her high school auditorium.

Once they are registered, placement and advising insure that students "start where they are." Scores on placement tests in English and mathematics determine the level of courses which students may take. Special advising is provided to groups such as veterans and learning disabled students. Our intention is that students who have weak reading and math skills can, with perseverance, achieve college level performance and enter a degree program.

The faculty also have been developing academic content courses to include experiential learning and new technologies. Freshman composition, for example, includes an investigation of the FreeStore, a local urban charity. The capstone experience for the

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An affirmative action/equal opportunity institution

class is the creation of a home page on the World Wide Web to "publish" the results of their study. Additionally, some freshman composition courses use Netscape as a research source while the art history classes use CD-ROM programs and publish assignments through e-mail. This ease of access means students and professors can tap into virtually all available electronic resources on most academic topics.

The pivotal segment of the First-Year Experience is a course entitled "Orientation to Learning," a ten-week, once-a-week, pass/fail course taught by peer-tutors under full-time faculty supervision. The method (and politics) by which the new course was instituted involved a number of steps. The new course began life as an element in a prestigious two million dollar grant. The one-credit hour of the new orientation course allows some students who are most at risk to take just three courses in the first quarter of their first year. The new orientation course fits appropriately into the needs of our most at-risk students and provides an integrated curriculum which allows the students time to gain essential reading and study skills. The dean also integrated the course into his request for funding the expansion of our advising and placement services.

The course involves our at-risk students in finding a voice in academic discourse. The new orientation course is intended to bond students into small groups that are safe areas for discussion of new or controversial ideas. Orientation classes provide an opportunity for finding one's voice in discussion, for breaking down the anonymity of a large urban university and for having opportunity to own the facilities of the campus and the intellectual properties of college life. (DEMONSTRATE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES IN WORKSHOP)

These interlocking elements of ease of registration, careful diagnostics and advisement, appropriate levels of instruction with computer access, and the bonding experience of the orientation course provide an integrated experiential package for University College's First-Year Experience at the University of Cincinnati.

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Title of Presentation: Partnership Programs: Linkages for Successful Recruitment and Retention of Minority Students, Faculty, and Staff

Presenters' Names: Dr. Molly Woods, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Dr. Geneva Hagedorn, Assistant Vice President for Administration--Human Resources and Affirmative Action
Ms. Stephanie Tamborello, Director of the Office for Student Development

ABSTRACT

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The University

The University of Houston-Downtown (UH-D) is an open-admissions, public, urban university and is committed to serving the educational needs of the multicultural population of Houston and the surrounding communities. The university recruits and retains a highly qualified faculty and staff who are dedicated to the institution's educational mission. Through instructional excellence, creative and scholarly activities, and community involvement, the University contributes to the technological, scientific, business, economic, social, and cultural development of the area.

The UH-D maintains a strong commitment to maintaining the diversity of its students and to strengthening the diversity of its faculty and staff. Student enrollment mirrors the population of the City of Houston. With no single ethnic group in the majority, the student body is 31 percent Hispanic, 30 percent Anglo, 24 percent African-American, 11 percent Asian-American, and 4 percent International.

Like most institutions across the nation, the UH-D is striving to increase faculty diversity. Faculty ethnicity is 75 percent Anglo, 7 percent African-American, 11 percent Asian-American, 5 percent Hispanic, and 2 percent other.

The university has attracted and retained a staff that, like its student body, reflects the population of Houston: 44 percent Anglo, 26 percent African-American, 23 percent Hispanic, and 7 percent Asian-American. Efforts have been intensified to recruit and retain minority administrators and professional staff.

Recruitment and Retention Strategies

Short-term action plans have been developed including early intervention programs, mentoring, leadership training programs and precollegiate outreach, among others. Long-term activities include program development, joint admissions and articulation agreements, distance learning, and development of a more traditional campus environment including construction of a wellness/recreation facility to serve inner-city youth more effectively. Development of teacher education, including a bilingual teacher education program is expected to enhance minority recruitment and retention. The university has also amended its hiring procedures to assure greater accountability for enhancing faculty diversity.

Academic partnerships of the UH-D reflect the institution's commitment to expanding access to all levels of education for Houston's population. Collaborative projects include outreach within the K-12 sector as well as partnerships to enhance articulation with community colleges. The university participates in programs with other general academic institutions and graduate and professional schools to promote pathways to advanced study for its students. Partnerships with the business and professional communities provide resources that enhance opportunities for students and faculty.

Internally, the offices of Student Affairs, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, and Human Resources and Affirmative Action have "become one" in their efforts to recruit and retain minority students, faculty, and staff.

Presenters will describe the internal and external partnerships that have had a positive impact on the university community. They will highlight successes, some of the pitfalls they have encountered in partnering, and solutions that have worked at UH-D.

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Student Ambassadors: The Personal Process of Building Partnerships with Prospective Students

Lilly J. Schubert Walker

ABSTRACT

The Student Ambassador program links prospective students with first year students through an educational program which communicates information about common concerns of first year students, confronts myths and mistakes that influence student progress, and connects students with caring peers who share similar backgrounds and experiences. This session will describe the developmental phases of building successful partnerships between students, discuss the critical components of a student ambassador program, and demonstrate some of the tools used by the student ambassadors, (e. g. video, interactive questionnaires, group exercises) to educate prospective students and involve individuals in the mutual process of integrating into the university community. Participants attending this session will be encouraged to develop their own student ambassador programs utilizing the information provided during this session.

The Student Ambassador program is an educational initiative which connects first year students with prospective students. The purpose of the program is to involve first year university students in the collaborative enterprise of educating others about university. The program informs prospective students about the benefits of the Introduction to University (99.111) course, instructs them in some of the survival skills necessary for making a successful transition to university and initiates connections between students. For all students in the program the Student Ambassador program increases their sense of belonging to the university community and facilitates the development of interpersonal communication and networking skills.

The process of building partnerships with prospective students involves three developmental stages: Invitation, Involvement and Integration. In order to successfully commence the invitation stage the coordinator of the program established collaborative working relationships with university admissions and recruitment personnel. This included collaboration

in the training and preparation of the student ambassadors as well as assistance in developing marketing ideas. The invitation stage included initial contact with school counsellors, principals and teachers, school visitations, student sharing, and student presentations. The involvement stage provided the opportunity for prospective students and current students to relate on a more personal level. All Student Ambassadors were trained in skills on facilitating group discussion, increasing audience participation and developing collegial relationships with other students. All students who demonstrated an interest in the course were formally followed up with by the Student Ambassadors. In the fall after the prospective students has enrolled in the Introduction to University course the student ambassadors serve initially as peer mentors connecting these students to the university, with each other and with themselves.

The focus of a Student Ambassador program is to develop partnerships between students as well as among many university constituencies. One of the critical components necessary for an effective student ambassador program is training for the Student Ambassadors focused on skills (i. e. communication, networking, presentation, group discussion) training and information (university admission information, special first year programs that assist students, student adjustment research). Another essential element is the development of an integrated, engaging and interesting informational materials. This program developed several educational tools including a video, interactive educational materials and inviting marketing materials.

The Student Ambassador program provides an opportunity for students to invest in the educational outreach of their university. When students talk with each other about their educational experiences and insights universities invest in their most important resource. In this program students become teachers and we all learn together.

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Facilitating the Transition: The Outreach to Manitoba High Schools Project

Pat Mochnacz, Learning Skills Specialist
Learning Assistance Centre, University of Manitoba

Bridging the gap between high school and university is becoming ever more challenging for our students. Increasing financial and parental pressures, the necessity of working part time, larger first year classes, fewer resources in terms of advisors and faculty members, and disillusionment with the job market have made the transition year very difficult for many first year students. This presentation describes the **Outreach to Manitoba High Schools Project**, a program in which instructors from the University of Manitoba Learning Assistance Centre visit urban and rural high schools throughout the province of Manitoba every spring. The goal is not to recruit students, but rather to facilitate the transition to university by alerting prospective first year students as to where they can go for help should they encounter difficulties in their first year, and where they will find a familiar "friendly face" in an institution of 20,000 plus students.

This outreach project was conceived and developed by the presenter as a result of facing her own challenges in making the transition from working in a small, familiar high school setting to instructing and advising in a large, often impersonal commuter university. The program was born of the conviction that the key to "enhancing student learning, success, satisfaction and retention" (the theme of this conference) was to offer information sessions to Grade 12 students **in their own high school before they arrive on campus**. From its modest beginnings in 1989 when the presenter single-handedly visited twenty (20) urban high schools in Winnipeg, this project has grown to involve four instructors speaking to approximately 1500 Grade 12 students in over forty (40) urban and rural schools, within a 500 kilometer (300 mile) radius of Winnipeg.

Using the lecture and interactive discussion format, this presentation outlines the origins, funding and development of this award - winning program, and discusses the goal of the project - **to facilitate the transition from high school to university** by offering a one hour presentation to Grade 12 university bound students about the personal and academic supports available through Student Affairs. Handouts provide attendees with details of the content of the Outreach Project as well as feedback from students and high school counsellors. The presentation concludes with a discussion of future plans for the project, focusing on the need for research to investigate the impact of this program on student success, satisfaction and retention.

This presentation is relevant to all interested in developing programs aimed at facilitating the transition from high school to university.

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MARYLAND

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Title of Presentation: EDCP 108-O - A Controlled Experiment

Program Presenter:

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Abstract:

The goal of this program will be twofold: • To provide a brief overview of the goals and objectives of a one credit freshmen seminar program currently offered for freshmen at the University of Maryland at College Park. • To provide an extensive overview of the experimental study that was conducted with freshmen who were enrolled in the course in the Fall, 1986. The primary focus of this program will be to provide overview of the freshmen seminar course offered at the University of Maryland, while highlighting the research that was conducted. An experimental study was employed during the Fall, 1986, and it was found that the course had a statistically significant impact on both retention and grade point ratio. The experimental design & results of this study will be shared with participants, as well as the research that is currently being conducted.

The University of Mississippi

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**"Not What You May Think:
The University of Mississippi and the Evolution of a Multicultural Community"**

Thomas Wallace
Gloria D. Kellum
John W. Winkle III
David Scott Hargrove

I. Introduction

The unfortunate heritage of the University of Mississippi as a symbol of a racially segregated society is well documented. Not until 1962 did the institution reluctantly admit to the Oxford campus its first African American student, James Meredith, and only then through the active intervention of federal authorities. More than a quarter century later, the image of the University--known widely by its colloquial title "Ole Miss"--still suffers from that legacy of intolerance. Critics point to symbols associated with the University, such as the nickname ("Rebels"), the mascot ("Colonel Reb"), and the theme song ("Dixie"), as a promotion of the unmistakable vestiges and values of the Confederate South. Systematic efforts to dispel these adverse public perceptions began in earnest in 1985 when then Chancellor R. Gerald Turner announced a policy to recruit vigorously minority faculty, staff and administrators. One decade later, current Chancellor Robert C. Khayat has continued that initiative by mandating that campus populations (faculty, staff, and student) reflect the demographic profile of the State itself. For both leaders, the challenge to construct and publicize a viable multicultural community became a high order priority.

II. Program Proposal

The purpose of this proposal is to report on the progress of efforts to change the campus culture and, in particular, to enhance the first-year experience for African American undergraduates. To that end, we highlight four innovative student programs introduced during the past six years to develop a sense of racial community. First is the annual Mississippi Achievement Conference held on campus one spring weekend for qualified high school seniors. African American student leaders from the around the State attend a two-day session on the University campus. This forum provides opportunities for students to investigate academic programs, learn about financial aid opportunities, visit with currently enrolled students about student life, and talk with African American alumni about the value of a University degree.

During this time, students are exposed to the multicultural environment that exists on the campus. Next comes Minority Perspective, a special orientation session each August for incoming black students and their parents. Business and professional leaders from the campus and community convene as a panel to describe the nature of, and explain the qualifications for, their lines of work. The Mentor Program is designed to assist first-year black students in their acclimation to college life. Mentors are diverse University faculty, staff, and administrator volunteers who in essence "adopt" students and offer needed advice and support especially in the first semester. Finally, the Afrolympics is a unique event as historically black and white Greek organizations set up diverse teams for a day of fun and competitive games. The positive interaction of the groups fosters harmony and appreciation for different cultures. These four programs are truly multicultural because they draw together people otherwise divided by geography, race, and socioeconomic status.

III. Evaluation

This proposed presentation both describes and assesses these programs. Our analysis of statistical and anecdotal data suggests that these experiments are measurably successful along several dimensions. First, they are important recruitment mechanisms for prospective families in the African American community. Second, they are effective retention tools because they foster that inestimable notion of belonging and connectivity. Third, they enhance the overall first-year experience for most black students. Finally, these programs contribute to a growing campus appreciation for multiculturalism because they emphasize partnerships between and among students, faculty, and staff.

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CONFLICT RESOLUTION: COMMUNITY BUILDING IN A FRESHMAN YEAR EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

Presenters: Thomas D. Cavenagh, JD., Assistant Professor of Business Law; Director
North Central College Dispute Resolution Center
Thomas E. Deering, Ph.D., Director Regional Professional Development Center;
Associate Professor

ABSTRACT

North Central College has established a Dispute Resolution Center which provides services, training and development opportunities to students in a variety of contexts. The Center is a comprehensive one providing a variety of opportunities for students wishing to acquire dispute resolution and negotiation skills. The Center serves the college community in many ways. First, the Center is responsible for management of student disciplinary matters through Administrative Hearing and formal Hearing Panel processes. Second, the Center resolves non-disciplinary student and student organization disputes through the mediation process. Third, the Center provides training of student\faculty panels to hear and mediate student disciplinary matters and disputes. Fourth, incoming students are acquainted with the Dispute Resolution Center during their freshman orientation seminar and through their residence hall staff through presentations and Center printed materials to increase retention potential and reduce the difficulties associated with commencing a college education in a residential setting. Finally, the Center director teaches credit courses in conflict resolution through the college Leadership, Ethics and Values Program.

The Center is developing several educational opportunities which impact communities outside of the college. First, the Center is preparing to offer mediation by trained Student Associates of 'live'

disputes for local courts, businesses, schools and churches in dispute resolution to be presented by Student Associates and the Program Staff some of which will be federally funded through a three-year Learn and Serve Grant. Finally, the Center is developing internship and residency experiences in community mediation centers locally, and abroad, through the Center sponsored Nassau-based Bahamas Community Mediation Center.

We believe a program of this nature builds community by allowing students the opportunity to resolve conflicts for themselves and for others in productive and mutually satisfactory ways. Such community building must begin during a students freshman year. The Center is prepared to mediate roommate, classmate and teammate disputes. These are matters which are not effectively managed in a judicial context, but which affect campus communities significantly. Many of these matters are especially pertinent for freshman. Most are away from home and living with non-family members for the first time. Moreover, the Center mediates matters which arise as a result of a multicultural campus community. These tensions are profoundly difficult to address through a judicial process, but are resolved splendidly through mediation.

This presentation will outline the North Central College Program, explain how it fits into a freshman year experience program, provide participants with materials used in the Program, and offer participants the opportunity to discuss the impact of a broadly constructed dispute resolution program on student and community life.

Biographical Information

Thomas D. Cavenagh

Thomas D. Cavenagh is an assistant professor of business law teaching courses in law, ethics and dispute resolution. In addition, he directs the College Dispute Resolution Center and is the Acting Director of the College Leadership, Ethics and Values Program. He graduated from Trinity College with a BA in philosophy. His JD is from DePaul University College of Law.

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SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND THE FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

Thomas E. Deering Ph.D., Director, Regional Professional Development Center; Associate Professor, University Of Missouri-Rolla
Thomas D. Cavenagh, JD., Assistant Professor Of Business Law; Director, North Central College Dispute Resolution Center

ABSTRACT

Individuals differ significantly in moral outlook. The literature suggests many different theoretical models in attempts to explain these differences (e.g., Hogan, 1973; Kohlberg, 1982). One model suggested by Forsyth (1980) is a two-dimensional model of personal moral philosophies. He argues that two basic dimensions underlie differences in moral thought. The first dimension, idealism, refers to individuals' concern for the welfare of others. In their moral orientation, those who are idealistic insist that one must always avoid harming others, whereas non-idealists assume that harm will sometimes be necessary to produce good. Relativism, the second dimension, refers to the extent to which individuals base their personal moral philosophies on universal ethical rules. Relativists assume that exceptionless moral principles do not exist; on the other hand, non-relativists assume that such principles as "Thou shalt not lie" provide useful guidelines for action.

According to Forsyth (1980, 1981, 1985, Forsyth and Pope, 1984), idealistic individuals as identified by the Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ) devised by Forsyth (1980), adopt an ethic of caring based on their relationships with, and responsibilities to, other individuals. In an age when society is demanding citizens demonstrate a greater degree of social responsibility than in the recent past, business leaders, educators, politicians, individuals as a whole needs to show this idealism

and ethic of caring. Universities have an obligation to help their students develop an understanding of social responsibility. Furthermore, students must understand there is a correlation between ethical orientation and behavior as both citizens and professionals. A first-year program is an ideal avenue to begin challenging students to see this correlation. Several strategies which can be implemented in first year programs will be discussed.

The purpose of this study was to compare the ethical orientation and the ethic of caring in a group of British and American university students. Each group was administered the EPQ (Forsyth, 1980). The EPQ data was analyzed using chi-square (X 2). The presentation will focus on the implications of the study for freshman year experience programs, not on the statistics.

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Thomas E. Deering is the director of the South Central Regional Professional Development Center, and Associate Professor at the University of Missouri-Rolla. He has been a teacher and administrator at both the secondary level and in higher education. Mr. Deering graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia with a B.S. in Secondary Social Studies. His M.A. In History is from Southeast Missouri State University, and his M.A. in Philosophy is from the University of Illinois-Chicago. He received his Ph.D. From the University of Missouri-Columbia with an area of specialization in History and Philosophy of Education.

University of Missouri St. Louis

Pierre Laclede Honors College

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EXCELLENCE WITHOUT ELITISM:

A SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC HONORS COLLEGE AT AN URBAN COMMUTER UNIVERSITY

Dr. J. Frederick Fausz
Dean of The Pierre Laclede Honors College

Imagine a university setting in which the highest administrator knows the name and background of every student, because he has personally recruited, advised, and taught each one. Consider that this place has no faculty ranks, but relies on student evaluations to select master teachers to offer small, writing-intensive, multidisciplinary seminars. Now, realize that this intimate, excellent "classical academy" is a ***public residential honors college*** within a large metropolitan commuter university, and that it successfully recruits its talented, diverse student body of 250--13% from ethnic minorities, 4% with physical and/or learning disabilities, 45% first generation college, and ranging in age from 16 to 66--while NOT considering standardized test scores. Finally, note that this special college retains 95% of both freshmen and new transfer students and places 75% of its students into top graduate programs at prestigious universities.

This slide-lecture will describe the academic philosophy and physical features of this young, dynamic institution--The Pierre Laclede Honors College at the University of Missouri-Saint Louis, ***the only honors college in America with a separate, comprehensive, and residential campus.*** Pierre Laclede preserves the best academic attributes of an Oxford or Cambridge college, such as the intensive, small-scale teaching of the liberal arts and sciences, while rejecting the elitism, expense, and pretentiousness that have traditionally restricted broad public access to such educational opportunities. By adapting a time-honored pedagogical model and complementing it with unprecedented amounts of personal attention, Pierre Laclede has succeeded in helping all "freshers" reach their full potential for learning and leadership, scholarship and friendship, despite the problems confronting a diverse, contemporary urban student body of all backgrounds, conditions, and interests.

Given the present preoccupation with transmitting ***electronic information***, there is a desperate need to promote the "old-fashioned," face-to-face teaching of critical thinking, oral articulation, and analytical writing--the essential skills that foster ***human wisdom.*** Preserving and practicing the classical pedagogy of ancient Athens, small residential honors colleges, by their very traditionalism and constant emphasis on camaraderie for their students, may well become the "innovative" educational alternative of the next generation.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEW SOUTH WALES

THE LEARNING CENTRE

Learning Diversity in the First Year Classroom: A Cross - Cultural Study

Prem Ramburuth

First year students bring to their new academic environment, a range of prior learning experiences, learning style preferences, approaches and attitudes which are bound to impact on their learning. These factors are particularly significant in relation to students from culturally diverse backgrounds, as they may result in learning behaviour that could be viewed as being "different" from that of the mainstream culture, and sometimes lead to generalisations and stereotyping of these behaviours. As the numbers of students from culturally diverse backgrounds engaging in higher education increases, greater attention needs to be paid to identifying the learning preferences of these students and learning differences that may exist. This is necessary to better understand and accommodate learning style preferences, to assist with the process of academic acculturation, to encourage the adjustment of teaching styles to cater for differing learning styles, and to empower students through a clearer understanding of how they learn.

This paper reports on the findings of a study conducted at an Australian university which aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of the learning style preferences and practices of international students from a range of cultural backgrounds. It also reports on the learning preferences and practices of mainstream Australian students and makes comparisons in terms of cross cultural learning behaviour by identifying similarities and differences. The findings challenge some of the more stereotypical descriptions of the learning behaviour of students from diverse cultural backgrounds, such as the notion of so called "Asian" learning styles, with support for the findings being drawn from several international studies.

The study involved international students newly enrolled at an Australian university and studying abroad at an English speaking university for the first time. They were from countries such as China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. The Australian students were newly enrolled English speaking students from a range of academic disciplines but enrolled in a common first year course.

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Three instruments were used in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the learning backgrounds of the international students, and the learning style preferences and practices of both groups. These included:

- a Prior Learning Questionnaire developed by the presenter to ascertain prior learning experiences in students' home countries
- the Study Process Questionnaire (SPQ) developed by John Biggs to identify student approaches to learning in terms of descriptors such as deep, surface and achieving
- the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ) developed by Joy Reid at the University of Wyoming and validated specifically for use with students from non-English speaking backgrounds. It identifies learning in terms of descriptors such as visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, group and individual.

Findings of the study indicated that, in some instances, there were no significant differences between the learning preferences of culturally diverse students and their Australian counterparts. This was evident, for example, in both groups' low preference for auditory and visual learning, signalling interesting implications for teaching given that these two modes are the most common modes of tertiary teaching! Similarly, both groups indicated a strong preference for kinesthetic learning, suggesting a preference for experiential type learning and participation in classroom activities.

At the same time, trends in student responses indicated that significant differences did exist, for example, in student preferences for tactile, group and individual learning, as well as in motives and strategies in deep and achieving approaches to learning. It is interesting to note that where differences did exist, they were somewhat different from commonly held beliefs and generalisations about the learning behaviour of culturally diverse students, generalisations that are often based on anecdotal evidence.

The issue of cultural and learning diversity in today's tertiary classroom needs to be more widely recognised and addressed. Suggestions for doing so include an understanding of students' prior learning experiences, an acknowledgement of their preferred learning modes, an adjusment of teaching modes (where appropriate) to accommodate learning diversity, and the provision of appropriate support services to assist students in making learning adjustments. The presenter invites further suggestions to assist these students acculturate to their new learning environment and enhance their learning.

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A Class Profile at the University of the North

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ABSTRACT

In this paper I will present a report on a current research project.

At many universities academic staff develop their idea of who they are teaching based on personal experience with all the problems of selective memory and confirmation of prejudice. At universities where staff are largely drawn from the same constituency as the students this might not be a huge problem. However, at many historically black universities the staff and students come from quite different cultures, often with a history of anatagonism. When, as is the case at University of the North, the institution is undergoing transformation, the differences between various staff cliques exacerbates the situation. Furthermore, the student body itself is changing.

The first element presented in this paper is a picture of a typical class of about 400 students. Who are we teaching?

The problem of how to develop a clear picture of a student body became apparent when I asked Faculty to tell what they wanted to know about students. Often, they told me what they thought of students. Was this indifference, denial, or assumption of correct knowledge? Administrative staff would say they have no contact with students and ten minutes later in the conversation, describe their frustration with students always coming into their offices. Clearly we are dealing with something much more than a simple question of information.

The research process has been designed in such a way as to try and capture a quality of experience. Four hundred essays written in response to questions such as What's it like being here? What does it mean to you and your community that you are here? and so on, are analysed, questionaire results are analysed, and senior students asked to interview the new students. An full qualitative picture is thereby developed.

The second element presented in this paper for discussion is the research process itself. The presenter has published a paper on the first-year experience based on a similar methodology at another university. This take that process a little further.

The presentation of the paper will be brief (full copies will be made available) and more time will given to the workshop/discussion part of the presentation which will involve a structured process of participants reviewing aspects of their own experience and being invited to consider our experience and its paralells with theirs, and how they might use the processes which I describe.

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Recognizing Freshers as Organizational Actors and Moral Agents

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First year students (known as freshers in the U.K.) are unlike any other newcomers to the organization we call University. Traditionally, freshers begin their university experience together and graduate with the same students four years later. Joining-up with an organization is experienced differently by freshers than by other newcomers. Yet any newcomers share the transition experience of sense-making, "how things work around here". This is learning the culture of the organization.

The underlying assumption of my research is that intentionally engaging freshers in a shared inquiry with other organizational actors from academic and other services, recognizes first year students as coresponsible partners in continuous and co-curricular learning. It serves to energize their transition.

I begin with the perspective that all the organizational actors in the University are both customers and suppliers. I argue that the resistance to the concept of student as customer stems from the predominance of the manufacturing model of organization. But the University is a service organization and rejects the commodifying of students.

The University as service organization differs from the goods organization. Services are relatively intangible: the services provided, whether in-class or out-of-class, are acts or processes or encounters or exchanges that result in experiences more often than they result in the possession of some product or object. The student-customers participate in the production of the services they receive. For the most part there is no lag between the time a service is produced and the time it is delivered and consumed.

I take the leap from positioning student-customers as partners in the production of their own learning to positioning students as co-workers in a service organization. This allows me to study Axel Honneth's (1995) philosophy that the expansion of the service sector has led to a "vacuum of recognition" for service workers and hence, I will argue for first year students. Honneth claims that service workers do not enjoy the "traditional criteria of success to which the social esteem for industrial labour had hitherto been experientially attached"(228). The "clear and uncontroversial 'criterion of economic efficiency'" that values industrial productive work is lacking - and so begs the question. What is "worthwhile" work in a service organization - what type, what amount, what pace of work, what style?

I am attracted to Honneth's "vacuum of recognition" - nature abhors a vacuum - because it is an opportunity for developing new criteria for *recognizing* first year students as organizational actors. I argue that organizational actors establish these criteria by inquiring into the processes of service activity.

Head of Department: Professor J E Thomas MA BSc DPhil DLitt FRSA
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My research intervention focuses on first year students engaging in a shared inquiry of these processes with their organizational partners. Shared inquiry emerges through mutual storytelling. To tell a story is to engage in understanding of process. Storytelling articulates the why and how of events. By listening to and probing each others' stories, a community of understanding and sense-making can emerge. It is only when newcomers to the culture hear the insider stories, including the war stories, and begin to tell their own insider stories, that they are recognized as organizational actors.

Storytelling makes the organizational actor's intentions explicit, or in Tirrell's (1990) terminology, articulated. The actor becomes a moral agent or moral author in articulating, in giving an accounting of her own actions or the actions of others. She is the author of her own deeds. The storyteller articulates events, characters, motives, feelings, and actual or possible consequences. This is the causal dimension of authoring. There is also a normative aspect to storytelling; the storyteller has to *justify* her "decisions (and actions) to others in the community in terms of shared conceptions of both how things are and how things should be"(117). Coresponsibility and moral development are immanent in narrative structure, Tirrell suggests: "through telling and listening to stories, we learn to make subtle and not so subtle shifts in point of view, and these shifts are crucial to developing the sense of self and others necessary to moral agency"(119).

The recognition of where first year students are "coming from" not just where they are "coming to" surfaces in mutual storytelling. Transition can be illuminating when freshers have the opportunity to make sense of their old story, in the context of their first year story. Harrison Owen (1987) looks to the human spirit to reveal transformation in organization; his reference to an American Indian Chant captures a sense of the transition to the spirit or culture of the University. It traces the development of coresponsibility and moral agency. It traces the transition from outsider to insider.

We are the old people.
We are the new people.
We are the same people.
Deeper than before.

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CREATING PARTNERSHIPS WHICH WORK FOR DISABLED STUDENTS: Assisting Faculty and Administrators to Understand, Educate and Retain a Special Group of Students.

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Post-secondary institutions in the United States have been confronted with the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act in recent years. Most public institutions have been under the mandates of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504. This translates to a proportion of students with disabilities on American campuses that is growing, and the diversity of the types of disabilities which this group of students discloses during matriculation is also expanding. Recent statistics reveal that 9.2% -- 140,000 first year students -- will be students with a documented physical, medical or emotional disability.

The impact that this growing number of students presents to faculty and administrators focuses on a unique challenge for American colleges and universities. Issues of how to provide affordable and adequate campus access present the opportunity for university departments/divisions to collaborate and combine resources. These same issues may also initiate linkages between colleges and external public or community agencies. During times of increasingly scare financial resources, these issues become more pronounced.

How, then, does an institution provide services to a special population which is often viewed as taking "too much" time and energy from faculty and administrators? Are colleges and universities not paying attention to a growing consumer base? Why does making an initial investment in providing quality services for disabled students later provide a dividend in student retention and loyal alumni?

This presentation provides an outline of effective services to respond to these questions and issues.

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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EAU CLAIRE
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Creating the Ultimate Blugold Experience
UWEC's Residence Life CUBE Program Overview

Background

The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire has expanded it's mission from preparing undergraduates to be teachers in 1916, to providing quality undergraduate programs in liberal arts and sciences, business and professional programs today.

The student body at the state university has grown from 159 in 1916 to approximately 10,000 today. The UW System, however, is actively managing enrollment and raising admission standards. UW-Eau claire was accepting as many as 2550 student as freshman a decade ago. Over the last several years that number has dropped to approximately 2000 in 1995.

Approximately 52 percent of entering students are first-generation university students, and approximately two thirds are women. Most are Wisconsin residents, although nearly one-third are Minnesotans.

Approximately 3,600 students, most of whom are in their first and second years, live in 10 residence halls. Demand for housing outweighs supply, and the residence halls not only operate at 104 percent capacity but also maintain long waiting lists. The active professional and paraprofessional staff of Housing and Residence Life offered more than 350 social, educational, recreational, and cultural programs to residents in 1993-94.

Current Situation

Like their colleagues across the country, members of the Residence Life staff at UW-Eau Claire have responded to the literature and date that suggest and support programming aimed to meet the specific challenges faced by entering university students. A pilot program in 1993-94 confirmed the need for such programming at UW-Eau Claire and provided valuable information regarding how best to design and implement FYE on this campus.

The Residence Life Program serves approximately 3500 students (incoming/new students, sophomores, juniors, seniors) with a staff of 114 resident assistants and 11 professional, master's level, live-in hall directors. In December of 1993, hall directors Derek Vaughan and Laura Gintz Jasper were charged with reviewing results of the pilot program and proposing a structure for 1994-95. A committee comprised of hall directors, resident assistants, and student leaders met several times during the spring semester of 1994 to brainstorm, ultimately forming subcommittees. The committee was ready to recommend several major adaptaions before semester end.

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"You Are Going to Africa!": Integrating International Elements into Freshman English

Julie Phelps Dietche

ABSTRACT

The course I teach is the second half of a 2-semester sequence required of all freshmen here at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point: "English 102: Freshman Composition." Our semester is 16 weeks. Classes meet 3 times each week for 50 minute periods. The average class size is 25 students.

English 102: "Africa and the African People" is divided into two parts. During the first eight weeks, the students are given a number of assignments geared to building a foundation. A variety of material is used: a National Geographic magazine, a map of Africa, a Christian Science Monitor Reprint, chapters from an introductory African Studies textbook, and a novel. In addition to writing informally in class, students write two papers out of class, begin basic library research on a specific African country, prepare a short bibliography, and write an essay exam on the novel. During the second half of the course, the students work more independently on a longer research project focusing on a topic of their choice relating to Africa; by the end of the semester they turn in an 8-10 page paper incorporating this research. Examples of paper topics include "Jomo Kenyatta and the Mau Mau Rebellion," "Egyptian Art," "River Blindness: Its Causes and Cures," and "Nigerian Women Writers."

In my presentation, I will focus particularly on activities and exercises I have devised to help break down the walls students may have built up to protect themselves. The first weeks of the course are crucial. On Day One, the students are told that no previous knowledge of Africa is required and that I assume they know nothing about the subject. I then begin at once to address a fear that many students will go to great lengths to disguise: the fear of their own ignorance.

One activity— "You Are Going to Africa!"—has been quite successful. This activity involves three different classes spread out over a 3-week period. Class #1: I first write on the blackboard: "Congratulations! You Are Going to Africa!"

The students are then divided randomly into groups of three by choosing slips of paper containing the name of an African country. The students then confer together: "How are you going to get ready to go to Togo?" (for example) or "to Zaire? What will you take with you? What will you leave behind? Once you get there, what do you want to do?" Class #2: we meet at the library with students looking for information about their specific country in preparation for their trip. Students continue this basic library work on their own and prepare a working bibliography with brief annotations on the three sources they found most helpful. Class #3 (after 2-week interval): students compare bibliographies and share information in groups and then with the class as a whole. "What do you know now that you didn't know 2 weeks ago? Do you still want to go to Togo?" This activity helps to break the ice in class and gets the students involved and relating to Africa in a way that it is hard for them to resist.

Other activities that work well during the first weeks include: Taking Inventory: here students are asked to "Write down everything and anything you know about Africa including stories, rumors"; after 20 minutes, students then share some of this; and Map Work: each student studies a map of Africa for 20 minutes and then shares with class: "What is one thing that you learned that you didn't know before and that you found interesting?" In both cases, questions are encouraged; students are teaching other students in an open and nonthreatening way.

In truth, many of the strategies and assignments I have designed for this course are diversionary tactics. When I play excerpts of traditional African music in class or scratchy recordings of an African language, I am trying to tap into the natural curiosity and yearning students have to discover something new (Ouagadougou . . . the Casamance . . . the Yoruba People!). While the topic of the course appears to be "AFRICA," it is the students themselves who are the secret agenda. By focusing on Africa, I am trying to break through the crust of tiredness and sameness that encumbers even 18 year olds, to wake up students who may be dulled down by reading and writing about topics that are too close to home. The course I teach—Freshman Composition—is a beginning and not an end. I want my students to know this. A focus on Africa and the African People is a place to begin, to help students to find the power that lies within them, the power to think and to be open to new and different peoples.

In the second half of my presentation, I will share with members of the audience resources available, reading lists, copies of syllabi, student handouts and samples of student papers. I am interested in exchanging information with others who may be teaching "non-traditional" courses such as this one.

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Psychosocial Factors Related to Minority Persistence on a Predominantly White Campus

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Many intervention programs focus much of their effort on providing academic and financial support for undergraduate minorities. However, in spite of efforts to intervene academically and economically, the retention rate for African Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanics does not seem to be improving. Other factors must account for the differences in persistence between minority and white college students. The authors argue that social and psychological factors may be undermining efforts at improving minority retention. Factors such as sociocultural alienation and poor academic integration make success in college difficult. Furthermore, an exclusive focus on academics and economics places most of the burden of change on the minority student and the institutional/social issues are neglected. Research in the area of student persistence in college has not thoroughly examined all factors. In fact, it has concentrated on academics and demographics. This strategy has its weaknesses and several criticisms can be leveled.

This study highlights differences in attitudes and social experiences between racial groups on a predominantly white campus including; isolation/alienation, institutional support for minorities, and academic satisfaction. Furthermore, these data provide evidence linking these attitudes and experiences to minority student persistence in school. Finally, the data here largely mirrors previous studies on socio-psychological factors and minority student persistence (Suen, 1983; Madrazo-Peterson & Rodriquez, 1978; Guloyan, 1986). It was argued that factors other than academic preparation and demographics may very well contribute to the difference in retention between minorities and whites.

Although as a group, minorities report significantly lower academic satisfaction, but separately no individual minority group differs significantly from whites. Most of the dissatisfaction comes from Hispanics and Native Americans, while Asians and African Americans seem to share a high level of academic satisfaction with whites. It is noteworthy that in spite of this fact African Americans still have a very low retention rate.

African Americans and Native Americans report the least amount of institutional support. Hispanics, however, report the highest level of institutional support followed closely by Asian Americans. It is difficult to know exactly what counts as institutional support. However, financial aid, student support services, and tutorial services on this campus may be more effective for Hispanics and Asian Americans than African Americans, and Native Americans. On the other hand, the faculty themselves may be perceived as the most important representatives of the institution. Future studies should examine who or what minorities perceive as the best institutional representative.

The most compelling data is that of cultural isolation. Whites report less isolation than all other groups. African Americans report disturbingly high levels of cultural isolation. Although, those who indicate that they have considered dropping out report significantly higher cultural isolation, lower institutional support for minorities, and low academic satisfaction, ten year retention rates mirror only the cultural isolation scores.

Tinto (1975; 1982; 1987) theorizes that student attrition is a function of social integration. Integration, or lack of, is accomplished through a series of positive and negative interactions between the students' background characteristics and the institution. Similarly, Astin (1982) proposes that persistence in college is a function of involvement and proposes five postulates of student involvement: 1) involvement requires investment of psychological and physical energy in objects; 2) involvement is a continuous concept; 3) involvement is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of involvement; 4) the amount of learning or development is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of involvement, and 5) educational effectiveness of any policy or practice is related to its capacity to induce involvement in students. The authors argue that a culturally isolated student will experience negative interactions and will have less involvement in school.

Although this data must be interpreted cautiously, strategies for change may nevertheless be suggested. Socio-psychological factors as determinants of minority student persistence in college need to be recognized at

predominantly white colleges. Faculty in any college or program have a responsibility to offer minority students support, encouragement and mentoring. It might be suggested that, since academic satisfaction by any individual minority group does not differ significantly from whites, coupled with the fact that retention is still low for most minorities, academic interventions alone are not adequate in retaining minority students.

Recruitment of minorities to college is only the first step. There are many hurdles to pass in order for the student to be successful. Perhaps the minority student pre-college experience has not prepared them to live independently away from their home environment or to meet the many varied challenges they encounter within a predominantly white campus.

Faculty mentoring, a growing strategy on campuses across the nation, attempts to develop close relationships between students and faculty. Although the literature is weak, some real successes have been reported (Lea & Leibowitz, 1983; Obler, Francis & Wishengrad, 1977). Mentoring successes may be limited, however, by the number of minority faculty and staff present on campus. Perhaps cultural isolation will not be overcome by mentoring unless the mentors are of similar backgrounds as the mentees. Because of this, it is necessary to step up efforts to increase minority faculty and staff presence on campuses.

If academic success is restrained by the social, cultural and psychological environment, then it is the environment that must change. Minority students report feeling isolated and unsupported by the institution at greater rates than whites. The required change should come from not only the students themselves, but by the greater institution and social atmosphere. When the student is in an environment in which they feel comfortable, they can succeed. Although currently students at Black colleges consider dropping out at a greater rate than blacks at white colleges, students at black colleges report greater satisfaction, positive psychosocial adjustments, a higher level of cultural awareness and commitment, and higher grades (Allen, 1987).

In summary, establishing a cultural environment in which minority students can thrive must start with the greater institution and faculty and staff. Institutions should foster a social networking system to enhance and facilitate the education process and promote career development for minorities. Minority students should be provided with the opportunity for a beneficial mentorship relationship and in turn provide mentoring to in-coming minority students. Finally, it appears evident that universities have a strong social responsibility to create an increased positive learning environment, socially as well as academically, so that minorities are not constrained by cultural barriers.

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How can Information Technology enhance the Learning Environment? Redress verses Globalisation – A South African Experience

Derrick A Young

Many educationists are sceptical about the effectiveness of technology in education. There have been numerous disappointments after the enormous expectation of the effect that technology would have. For example, radio has been available as an educational tool for more than half a century; educational television has been with us for over four decades; computers have been used in education since the late sixties; yet their use has not provided the results that had been claimed. Although there are many well documented individual successes, the overall achievements have been disappointing. Few, if any countries, have made wholesale changes and investments in technology as the panacea to their educational woes. Most often, the major successes have been in highly developed first world countries, and little has been achieved through technology to narrow the educational gap between the first and third worlds.

As we approach the next millennium, it would be unwise to adopt a similar scepticism, based on past experience, without first considering the key causes for previous failures and the salient technological developments in the final stages of this century. A review, with a balanced perspective, is particularly necessary with regard to higher education. Some of the major factors that are influencing the use of technology in higher education are:

- The convergence of three technologies during this decade – high speed, low cost computing; the availability of low cost mass storage; and the development of high capacity, low cost telecommunications.
- The recognition that information is a valuable and strategic asset in higher education.
- The influence of information technology on the way in which institutions of higher education teach, research and administer.

This paper outlines recent policy developments in higher education in South Africa, with particular reference to technology enhanced learning. Difficult decisions have to be made when investing in information technology so as to enhance the learning environment, both at an institutional, regional and national level. Tensions which emerge in developing policy in this area are outlined, particulary with regard to redress, where historical imbalances from the apartheid era have to be removed, and globalisation, where higher education systems have to be more competitive in order to be effective.

Several examples of specific projects that have been undertaken are discussed and their key features – that led to success and/or failure – are highlighted. These experiences and their influences on current policy development in South Africa are interpreted and emerging guidelines for good practice in this area are postulated.

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TITLE: **FIRST YEAR STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS VERSUS THE REALITY OF LEARNING AT UNIVERSITY.**

PRESENTER: **HAKANI JENNIFER MOYO**
LECTURER-IN-CHARGE OF THE COMMUNICATION SKILLS CENTRE

ABSTRACT

When students come to University after high school, they have their own expectations regarding University experience. They also look beyond the university years and envisage the satisfaction of achieving their goals in life, as a result of university education. Hence, in Zimbabwe and indeed in a number of developing countries, retention is not a problem since university education is very highly regarded. Most students aspire to have some form of university education and become frustrated if they fail to get it.

University administrators and the academic staff make careful preparations for the orientation of first year students. Programmes and facilities seen as best for the students are put in place. These university authorities become so engrossed in what they view as meeting the students' needs that little thought is given to the students' own perception of university experience. The impact of unrealised expectations might have a lasting negative effect on the student's academic development and overall performance.

In view of the above assumptions, the presenter asked some first year students in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Zimbabwe, to indicate what their expectations were when they first came to university and what they found to be the reality. They were also asked to identify aspects of the match or mismatch between their expectations and reality, which had the greatest positive or negative effect on their academic performance. This investigation was conducted towards the end of their first year course.

The data collected showed that while a number of programmes in place assisted the students to adjust to studying at university, others had a negative effect on some students' attitude to their academic work. Some students stated that they had expected to study subjects of their choice which they

had specialised in during the last two years at high school but they were given subjects which they did not like, and some which they had never heard of, for example, Linguistics.

This paper attempts to demonstrate that when students come to university they have certain expectations but sometimes there is a mismatch between expectations and reality. Some students expect figure-head guidance in planning their time and approaching their academic work. When they suddenly find that they are regarded as independent adults who are expected to make their own decisions about important social and academic issues, some experience shock which makes this period of transition rather traumatic. Empirical evidence of first year students' perspective of college or university experience can therefore be exploited in order to minimise the shock of transition for future students. This would enhance effective learning that could ensure success and lead to satisfaction when goals are realised.

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FORGING A CLASSROOM LEARNING COMMUNITY:

Louis Schmier
Professor of History

So many first year students come to our campuses afflicted with a varying severity of non-cognitive "LD:" "L"earning "D"ependency. It's a pernicious disability that drains the intellectual and emotional excitement, drive, energy, purpose and meaning from the student. Since attitudes have an effect on performance, this LD stunts or arrests intellectual development, academic achievement, and emotional growth. Blank faces, hollow gazes, silent voices, unexcited movements are the easily spotted physical symptoms of this malady. The intellectual disabilities are legion: shortage of creativity and imagination, deficient sense of curiosity, lack of initiative, weakened technical skills, addiction to dull and meaningless plodding, satisfaction with copying and memorizing and drill, preoccupation with test scores and grades, contentment with being controlled, inability to exercise empowerment. The emotional impediments fundamentally are a difficulty in believing in themselves, acceptance of mediocrity, a lack of pride, eroded self-confidence, weakened sense of self-worth, and an overriding fear of being wrong or "looking stupid."

The causes of this LD are what I call a "woundedness:" physical woundedness inflicted by the chance throw of genes, accident, and disease; intellectual woundedness resulting from a less than supportive educational system that plays with students in dumb-smart games; emotional, mental and spiritual woundedness resulting from a host of personal, social, and family situations, pressures, abuses and prejudices.

The emotions are there. The classroom is a stressful place not because it is a stressful place, but because the support system seldom exists wherein everyone finds comraderie with each other, is concerned for and cares about everyone else, and everyone assumes the responsibility for the success of each other. If we truly care for the students, then, we, as teachers, need to be more aware, less afraid of that dimension of our students. We must be more honest and more authentic in what we're doing. The purpose for recognizing, naming and addressing tensions and emotions that exist within the students and in the classroom is a means to help student start believing in themselves, become more comfortable with the spirit of inquiry and the joy of learning, become more aware of their innate powers and abilities.

Teaching to emotions or attitude is motivational. The emotion drives and gives direction to the intellect. It leads to academic performance and deepens

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understanding. It focuses on the student's attention, arouses interest, connects the student's world to learning, and builds a classroom community.

I will use the audience to simulate my classes. I will use the same format that I use in my classes. You will be randomly divided into groups as I divide my classes. Using a series of exercises which I use at the beginning of class, as well as examples of teaching techniques I use throughout the course, I will simulate a portion of how I generate and maintain the atmosphere of a learning community. You will experience what the students experience and feel what they feel. You will also gain insights into how the learning community increases competency in the use of analytical skills as well as a grasp of the contents and concepts of the subject. Above all, you will see how the obstructive isolation, competition, loneliness, and separateness of the traditional classroom is broken down and replaced with a trusting and supportive feeling of family. I have found that establishing an identity for every students in the learning community fosters courage and risk-taking. It bolsters self-confidence, self-esteem, and encourages growth. It satisfies the students' need for validation and affirmation. As the class evolves, students begin to disclose themselves. They begin to share their fears, their weaknesses, the murky part of them, their strengths, their light, who they are. And in so doing, they become gifts to each other.

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High Expectations: A Passport to Student Success

John A. McNeill and Richard F. Vaz

Motivation: Why Do I Need a Passport?

Why would a student need a *passport* to enhance learning, success, and satisfaction? What does a passport imply? Obviously, it implies travel from one place to another--often, to a place very different from where the student started.

Now, for successful travel to a new and different place, what do you need besides a passport? It helps to have a good map of where you're going. A solid foundation in the basic customs of the people is a good thing. And of course, as every traveler knows, you should be prepared for a little discomfort along the way.

This discussion will examine WPI's first-year curriculum in Electrical and Computer Engineering. We will consider two broad aspects in light of the "travel" theme:

What we do: This is the curriculum itself, a "map" that provides an overview of the field and an introduction to the many aspects of the electrical and computer engineering profession.

How we do it: Essential to the success of our program is setting very high expectations for our students. This causes many students to experience some discomfort. In the end, however, students welcome and indeed thrive on the challenge we set before them. This is shown repeatedly in student evaluation results which will be presented.

What we do: The courses

The educational philosophy underlying our first-year introductory curriculum emphasizes a *hands-on, project-oriented* introduction to the field of electrical and computer engineering. The students are encouraged to think at a system level: what kind of problems are addressed by electrical and computer engineers? Once students encounter this overview of the engineering profession, they are better motivated to learn the underlying principles and inner workings of the systems they have seen. Subsequent courses follow a "spiral curriculum:" knowledge is built up in successive levels of detail, while continuing to revisit the system-level issues that underly the engineering design process. Following is the introductory sequence, typically taken by students in the second half of their first year:

EE2011 Introduction to Electrical and Computer Engineering: A broad introduction in which students build projects and learn basic ideas of electrical engineering. The focus is on concepts and process rather than content and calculation.

EE2022 Introduction to Digital Circuits and Computer Engineering: An introduction to the concepts underlying computers and their use in engineering. The concepts introduced range from circuit-level (internal construction of logic gates) to system-level (computer organization). This helps students begin the process of understanding systems at several levels of detail.

This sequence contrasts sharply with the approach of traditional introductory courses, which begin by emphasizing detail without providing a motivating overview. Retention often suffers under the traditional approach, since most first-year students know little about electrical and computer engineering, and an overly detailed approach is unappealing, boring, and actually quite removed from engineering practice.

How We Do It: The Atmosphere

In an increasingly competetive global marketplace, there is little room for the mediocre performer. For our graduates to succeed, they must have a broad set of skills:

- high personal motivation
- flexibility and breadth
- critical thinking
- creativity and experimentation
- ability to work in teams
- ability to communicate effectively, verbally and in writing
- ability to learn independently

To prepare our students for this environment, WPI offers a rigorous array of upperclass courses, and requires substantive technical and interdisciplinary group project work of upperclass students. Yet our first year students are often poorly prepared for this journey. In too many American high schools, very little is expected of students, and often the brighter students need not work hard to excel. How are students to make the transition from high school to college, where the challenges and atmosphere will be foreign to them?

One might be tempted to make the transition gradual, easing the students into a heavier workload and higher challenges. In our experience, this is a mistake. If students' first impression is that college isn't much different than high school, the opportunity to communicate the difference has been lost. The transition to college, in combination with the introduction to a new and strange discipline, provides the perfect "checkpoint" at which to raise students' expectations of themselves.

In accordance with our "travel" theme, we believe the key to eventual student success and satisfaction is passage through what may be for many a difficult and disorienting experience very different from high school. In the 2011/2022 sequence, we set very high expectations and make substantial demands of the students, including:

- extensive homework sets, featuring calculation, computation and written expression
- weekly labs, with preparatory assignments and written lab reports
- independent learning of software tools
- computation projects with written and oral reports
- challenging tests requiring critical thinking beyond "what was covered in class"

Of course, like any good travel guides, we also must provide the appropriate support services! The faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate peer tutors associated with the courses are available for consultation on a regular basis. Students quickly learn that they can benefit greatly from this resource, as long as they are putting in the effort to do so.

Even though students often are initially taken aback by the work load and high expectations, evaluations indicate that most students rise to, and appreciate, these challenges. By setting high standards, we send the message to students that we believe they are capable of meeting those standards. They are empowered by their accomplishments, just as international travelers who overcome fear of the unfamiliar are emboldened for further adventures by thriving in a new setting.

Benefits

Based on student performance and student evaluations compiled over several offerings of this new sequence of courses, we perceive a number of benefits for students willing to commit themselves to the challenges put forth. We find that the students:

- are more knowledgable about the engineering profession, and thus more enthusiastic about their future careers;
- see the relevance of their freshman math and science coursework to the engineering profession;
- have a better idea what their capabilities in engineering are;
- learn to work hard and see the benefits;
- learn to think critically about the fundamental meaning of the concepts they encounter;
- learn to learn on their own;
- become part of the electrial and computer engineering "community" from early on in their education.

By taking on the challenges of this first venture into unfamilar territory, they prepare themselves for the more exotic educational voyages ahead. They see that their "Passport to Success" will be issued internally, by their own motivation and abilities.

Conclusions and Discussion

In our talk, we will share details of student evaluations and comments for these courses, and attempt to link these and other outcomes to specific pedagogical strategies as described above. We will then engage the audience in a dialogue regarding their experiences in helping first year students make the transition to a collegiate learning environment.

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EMSEP: Excellence in Mathematics, Science & Engineering Program -- A Program for Developing Academic Skills of Students

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Program Abstract

Transformations in the global market place in the coming century mandate a diverse work force with a very different skill base. In order to maintain our nation's global competitiveness, especially in the disciplines of engineering, mathematics, science, and technology, we will need to train and educate populations which have not traditionally had equal access to quality education and employment opportunities. WPI's award-winning Excellence in Mathematics, Science and Engineering Program (EMSEP) is designed to help increase the number of underrepresented students of African, Latino and American Indian descent entering the fields of science, mathematics, technology, engineering and management.

The development of EMSEP stemmed from a need to address two concerns in response to these global demands:

> How to attract, retain and graduate students in technical education fields from underrepresented constituencies (i.e. people of color and women).
>
> How to identify and support students, particularly during the freshmen year, whose pre-college preparation may not have been adequate enough to prepare students for a demanding college curriculum.

EMSEP is a comprehensive support service network designed to assist underrepresented minority students with the development of their personal and academic skills. Additionally, WPI has recognized that the development of personal and academic skills in retaining students is beneficial to all students within our academic community. EMSEP also provides a component which has institutionalized support services for non-minority students experiencing academic difficulty.

The primary goal of EMSEP is to recruit, retain and graduate underrepresented students of color by providing a smooth transition from high school through the first year and beyond and is coordinated by the Minority Affairs Office. EMSEP also endeavors to provide a mechanism to identify, assist and retain non-minority students through services provided by the Office of Academic Advising. Launched in 1993, EMSEP was developed with the assistance of three key offices, Admissions, Academic Advising and Multicultural Affairs. The program continues to be an integration of programs and services across university

departments including Minority Affairs, Academic Advising, Admissions, Student Development and Counseling Office, Student Affairs, Student Life, Career Development and Residential Services

EMSEP consists of three major components designed to provide an incremental approach to personal and academic development

The **Summer Bridge Program** provides a transition program for our freshmen minority students

Academic Support Services are offered during the first year with continuing support during the second year to our minority students

The **Academic Development Plan**, an intervention strategy involving a contract, is available to all students in academic difficulty, with the primary focus on the first year students

EMSEP is not a remedial program EMSEP is a program which challenges students to strive for academic and personal excellence EMSEP provides students with the framework and tools to shift their developmental paradigm By training students to use available resources to maximize effective effort, students who participate in EMSEP become more empowered and are pro-active in shaping their development Students also learn to continue to assess their performance and adjust their academic course using critical feedback

Research has shown that even academically talented and highly motivated underrepresented students of color can experience problems in college because of a failure to understand the road map to academic success Only one out of every three underrepresented students of color pursuing BSE degrees receives a degree compared to two out of three for non-minority students WPI's unique project -based curriculum with our emphasis on both teams and hands-on project work and the combination of classroom and laboratory experience is particularly appealing to underrepresented students of color Many of these students come to WPI by first attending our STRIVE program for pre-college minority students during the summer Through this program the students gain project experience as well as work experience while still in high school

EMSEP is part of our continuing efforts to recruit and retain traditionally underrepresented minority students We have been successful in obtaining support from corporate sponsors to support our programs including our precollege minority enrichment program Initially, EMSEP focused on the first two years Our success rate in recruiting and retaining students of color mirrors our investment in these programs underrepresented minority enrollment has grown 102% since 1991

However, EMSEP is more than just "the minority program " By offering services and help to all students who need academic assistance during the freshmen year we have avoided some of the resistance and isolation minority programs have faced on other campuses By integrating the programs and services, we have built upon our strengths and can offer a comprehensive institutional program for our students

In 1995, EMSEP received the National Academic Advising Association's (NACADA) and ACT's *Outstanding Institution Advising Program* award at the national conference in Nashville, TN

This year through a generous $104,000 grant from the GE Fund, EMSEP will expand its services to include a series of Academic Excellence Workshops/Supplemental Video Instruction programs designed to provide additional support in historically difficult courses in mathematics and science